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MORAL AND METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY.

BY

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VOL. II.

FOURTEENTH CENTURY TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION,
WITH
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DEDICATION.

TO

THE FRIEND

Who has been my fellow-worker in writing these volumes; whose hints and corrections have been of greater worth to me than those of all other critics; whose sympathy has been more to me than that of the largest circle of readers could have been; who has cheered me with the hope that a few may hereafter be the better for the lessons which we have learnt together respecting the lives of men and the ways of God.

January 2, 1862.

PREFACE.

The first volume of this Manual attempted to trace the moral and metaphysical inquiries of different nations in the ages before the coming of Christ. The second volume continued this sketch down to the age of Justinian, by whose order the Greek schools of philosophy were closed. The third volume was occupied by the period between Boethius, the beginner of the Latin or scholastic philosophy, and Aquinas and John Scotus, in whom it culminated. This concluding volume opens with William of Occam, in the fourteenth century, and terminates with Kant and Jacobi, at the end of the eighteenth.

From first to last I have kept one object before me. I have not aspired to give an account of systems and schools. That task, it seems to me, has been accomplished already as well as it can be accomplished. At all events, I could add nothing to the labours of previous writers. For I take no interest in the subject; I should have wearied myself and my readers equally if I had endeavoured to pursue it. But to trace the progress of the thoughts that have contributed to form these schools and systems; to connect them with the lives of the men in whom they have originated; to note the influence which they have exerted upon their times, and the influence which their times have exerted upon them; this I take to be an altogether different task. Whatever efforts have been made of this kind I have found most useful to myself; I think a number of young students have felt the usefulness of them, and have wished that they might be multiplied. For no one of them interferes with another. Every man who seriously studies the thoughts of his fellow-man, with a desire to understand them, will perceive something in them which an equally or a more diligent observer has not perceived. Every man who believes that there is a Providence directing the course of human thoughts, as well as of human events, will discover some relations between them, which a wiser and more learned man has not discovered. And for every hint the reader may be thankful, because it awakens, not binds, his own judgment; it does not oblige him to decide between the claims of different inquirers, but encourages him to profit by the successes and the failures of each one.

In the study of any past time I have endeavoured to place myself in that time—to live as much as possible with those who were living in it—not to anticipate what might be the interests and engagements of the subsequent age—not to impute to any the habits and opinions of our own. So far as I have been able to do this I have become more aware of the permanence of all great principles and questions; more convinced that only the accidents of them can ever become obsolete; more earnest to derive lessons for ourselves from the experience of our forefathers. In a short final chapter I have endeavoured to deduce some of those lessons; taking them as guides to the controversies with which we have been exercised during the last seventy years, and are exercised now. I believe that I have completed my task better by adopting that method than if I had gone as largely into these controversies as into those of previous centuries. Nothing is more needful in our present circumstances than to show that the questions which interested the ancient world, the first Christian age, the Middle Age, and which were supposed in the eighteenth century to have become extinct and worthless, are those which have most forced themselves upon the attention of the nineteenth century; which we cannot escape from if we wish it ever so much; which work themselves into our practical life; for which the man demands a solution even more than the professional philosopher. If I had enlarged more upon the teachings of the great thinkers of our time I believe I should have brought this moral of my book less palpably before my readers than I have done by the brief summary at the conclusion of it.

It will be evident to the reader of any part of these volumes that I have felt as a theologian, thought as a theologian, written as a theologian; that all other subjects in my mind are connected with theology, and subordinate to it. I use the word in its old sense. I mean by theology that which concerns the Being and Nature of God. I mean the revelation of God to men, not any pious or religious sentiments which men may have respecting God. A writer with this temper of mind, it may be thought, may not be unjust to the first thirteen centuries after the Christian era. Most philosophers were then, in some sense or other, theologians; possibly those may understand them best who despise them least. But how, having this prepossession, can I look impartially at the time which *this* volume embraces? How can I speak fairly of Giordano Bruno, Thomas Hobbes, Benedict Spinoza, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Gothold Ephraim Lessing? Whether I have spoken fairly of them I must leave others to judge. If I have not; if I have suffered the language which one and all of these men have used concerning beliefs which are for me most precious, to warp my judgment of them; if I have distorted their convictions and their statements; I at once declare that not my theology, but the atheism which fights in me against my theology, is answerable for that wrong. So far as I confess the God who is revealed in Christ I dare not misrepresent any one; I dare not refuse to see the good, and the struggle after good, which is in him; I dare not pass judgment upon him. So far as I am yielding to the guidance of God's good Spirit in my heart and mind, so far I shall hate the evil and untruth that is in any one of whom I speak in past or present times, as I hate it in myself; I shall desire to know what truth there was in him, what truth he was aiming at, as I shall desire to be true and to seek truth myself. In a thousand instances the reader may discover that I have failed of the standard which I thus set before me. He may think often that I have committed that which I confess to be a sin in the sight of God. Still I trust that what I have written may help him to set that standard before himself; to keep it more stedfastly in sight than I have done; to repent whenever he departs from it; to be sure that no other will be found safe in the last day.

LONDON, *January* 1862.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.—THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

	PAGE
Islamism and Christendom: the Philosophies which were developed out of them,	1-5
WILLIAM OF OCCAM—The Franciscan,	5
The Englishman,	6
His Logic,	6-8
Change from Ultra Realism to Nominalism,	8
The Theologian,	10
War with the Popes and Canonists,	10-15
The Bible,	16
GERMAN MYSTICS—Dominicans,	17
Master Eckart,	19
The Friends of God,	20
Theology against Aristotle,	21
The Popular Preacher,	22
The Absolute,	25
John Tauler,	26
The Layman,	27
The Moral Change,	29
England and Germany,	31

CHAPTER II.—FIRST HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

JOHN HUSS—The Bohemian Realist,	34-36
JEAN CHARLIER (GERSON)—The University of Paris,	37
Nominalism in Paris,	38
The Western Schism,	38
Gerson against Jean Petit,	39
Gerson at Constance,	40
His Toleration,	41
His Eclecticism,	42
His Morality,	43, 44
Thomas à Kempis and Gerson,	45-49

CHAPTER II.—*continued.*

PAGE
Nicolaus von Cusa—The Brothers of the Common Life, . 49
Greeks and Latins, . . . 51
Learned Ignorance, . . 52-57
Agreement of Faith, *Hunt after Wisdom*, . . 57-59

CHAPTER III.—SECOND HALF OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Marsilius Ficinus—Cosmo at the Council, . . . 60
Plato and Plotinus, . . . 61
The Academy, ... 62
Pletho and Gennadius, . . . 64
Platonism becoming popular, . . 65
Theology and Superstition of the Platonists, ... 67-70
Were they Pagans? . . . 70-73
The Artists and Lorenzo, . . 74
Pico of Mirandola—His Life, . . . 75-79
His Book on *Being and Unity*, . 79-83
Girolamo Savonarola—The Dominican Reformer, . . 84
The Enemy of Ecclesiastics and Artists, . . . 85
The Ruler and Prophet of Florence, 85-89
War with the Pope, . . 89-94
Florence the Central City of the Period, . . . 94, 95

CHAPTER IV.—FIRST HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Nicolo Machiavelli—*The Prince*, ... 96-98
Sir Thomas More—*The Utopia*, ... 98-100
More, the Anti-Utopian, . . 100
Erasmus Desiderius—The Humanists, . . . 100-103
Johann Reuchlin—The Hebrew Humanist, . . 103-105
War with the Monks, . . . 105-107
De Verbo Mirifico, . . . 107-110
Martin Luther—War with Aristotle, . . . 110-115
The Augustinian, . . . 115-117
The Theses, ... 117-119
The Politician, ... 119-121
The Moralist, ... 121, 122
Relation to Psychology, Ontology, and Logic, ... 122-125
Cornelius Agrippa—*Vanity of Arts and Sciences*, . . 125-129
Paracelsus—The Experimentalist and Alchemist, . . 129-131
Conclusion of the Period, . . . 131-133

CHAPTER V.—SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. PAGE

IGNATIUS LOYOLA AND JOHN CALVIN—The Battle of the Age, 134-138
ELIZABETH AND ENGLAND—The National Principle, . 138-140
PETER RAMUS—His Life, ... 140-145
Animadversiones Aristotelicæ, . . 145-149
MONTAIGNE—The Sceptical Humanist, . . . 149-152
BELLARMIN AND MARIANA—The Italian and Spanish Jesuit, . . . 153
Resemblances and Contrasts between them, . . 153, 154
Bellarmin's Politics, . 154-157
Mariana's *Treatise on the Education of the King*, . 157-161
BERNARDINO TELESIO—*De Rerum Natura*, . . . 161-163
GIORDANO BRUNO—The Neapolitan Dominican, . . 163, 164
Bruno on his Travels, . . . 164-166
The Disciple of Lully, . . . 167
La Cena de le Ceneri, . . . 168-171
Della Causa Principio ed Uno, . . 171-182
Bruno's Relations to Ancient and Mediæval Philosophy, . . . 182-184
His Imprisonment and Death, . . 184-189
RICHARD HOOKER—The English Politician of the Sixteenth Century, ... 189
The Controversialist, . . . 190-192
The Defender of Law against Opinion, . 192-194
The Calvinist and Anti-Calvinist, . 195-198
FRANCIS BACON—Elizabethan Period of his Life, . . 198
Marked out as a Student of Nature at Cambridge, ... 200-202
His Temptations to forsake his Calling, . 202-204

CHAPTER VI.—FIRST HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

JAMES I.—The pedant King a help in understanding the Age, . 205-212
FRANCIS BACON—In the pedant Age, . . . 212
On what grounds Bacon fights with the old Philosophy, ... 214-216
Advancement of Learning, . . . 216-232
The *Novum Organum*, and the Life of Bacon, 232-235
THOMAS HOBBES—His Life by Himself, . . . 235-239
The Motive Power, . . . 239, 240
Elements of Philosophy, . . . 240-246
The Book *De Cive*, . . . 247-276
The Leviathan, ... 276-290

CHAPTER VI.—*continued.*

PAGE
Rene Descartes—The French Philosopher of the Seventeenth Century, ... 290
His Life, ... 290-294
The *Discours de la Méthode*, . . . 294-310
Descartes' Processes of Thought and his Dogmas, ... 310-313
Dedication and Preface to the *Meditations*, 313-316
Controversy with M. Caterus, . . . 316-319
Controversy with Hobbes, . . . 319-322
Hugo Grotius—The International Lawyer, . . . 323, 324
Jacob Böhme—The Görlitz Shoemaker, ... 324
His Influence on William Law, . . . 325-327
Life and Works of Böhme, . . . 327-331

CHAPTER VII.—THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Influence of Hobbes on the Period after the Restoration, . 332-335
Clarendon—His Book against Hobbes, . . . 335-338
Politics, Metaphysics, Theology, . . 338-340
John Milton—Philosophy of *Paradise Lost*, . . . 340-342
South—Philosophy of an English Divine, . . . 342-344
Philosophy of the Popular Preachers in England and France, 344-346
Cudworth, More, John Smith—In what sense they were Platonists, . . 346-350
Peter Sterry—The real English Mystic, . . . 350, 351
Malebranche—The Theological Disciple of Descartes, . 351-353
The *Entretien sur la Metaphysique*, . . 353-364
The Age of Casuistry, . . . 364, 365
Port-Royal and the *Lettres Provinciales*, . 365, 366
Antoine Arnauld—His Controversy with Malebranche, . 366-370
Bossuet—*De la Connaissance de Dieu et de Soi-même*, . 370-372
Benedict Spinoza—His Life, ... 372-375
Spinoza's *Cartesian Demonstrations*, . 375-381
The *Cogitata Metaphysica*, . . 381-392
The *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*, . 392-413
The *Ethics*, ... 413-432

CHAPTER VIII.—LOCKE AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Change in the Mode of Treating the History, . . . 433, 434
John Locke—The Political and Philosophical Revolution, . 434
The Ocean of Being, ... 434-437
Reasons for and against the New Method, . 437-441
Opposition of Descartes and Locke, how explained, ... 441, 442

CHAPTER VIII.—*continued.*

PAGE

JOHN LOCKE—Ideas and Objects, ... 442-445
The Mind, what Locke meant by it, . . 445, 446
Ethics of Locke, ... 446, 447
Politics of Locke, ... 447, 448
SHAFTESBURY—The Pupil of Locke, ... 449, 450
The Philosopher of Sunshine, . . 450, 451
BOLINGBROKE AND POPE—What distinguished them, and what they had in Common, . 451-453
English Deism and Physico-Theology, . . . 453-456
BERKELEY—Character of his Idealism, . . . 456-458
Relations of Berkeley and Malebranche, . . 458, 459
BUTLER—*Letters to Clarke*, ... 459, 460
Sermons on Human Nature, . . . 460-463
The *Analogy*, ... 463-465
Butler and the Methodists, . . . 465-468
JONATHAN EDWARDS—The American Philosopher, . . 469
Strength of his Puritan Faith, . 470, 471
Weakened by his Lockian Faith, . 471, 472
His Belief in Being, . . . 473
His Disinterested Love, . . 473-475
DAVID HARTLEY—The Philosopher of Vibrations, . . 475-478
RICHARD BENTLEY—The Reformer of Criticism, . . 478, 479
End of the Age of Locke, . . 479-483
FRENCH PHILOSOPHY—The Jesuits subduing the Cartesians, . 484-486
PETER BAYLE—The Learned Sceptic, . . . 486, 487
VOLTAIRE—The Sceptic of the Salons, . . . 487, 488
The *Lettres Philosophiques*, . . . 488-491
Inferences from these Letters, . . . 491-495
MONTESQUIEU—The French Lawyer and Nobleman, . . 496
The *Lettres Persannes*, . . 497
The *Esprit des Lois*, . . . 497-500
VICO—The Italian Student of Humanity, . . . 500, 501
His Studies in Mythology, ... 501-503
Influence of his Genius upon later Times, . . 503, 504
GERMAN PHILOSOPHY—LEIBNITZ—His Encyclopedic Tastes, 505, 506
The *Nouveaux Essais*, . 507-511
The *Théodicée*, . . 511-513
The Monads of Leibnitz, . 513
His Optimism, . . 514
His Correspondence with Clarke, . . 515-517
CHRISTIAN WOLFF—The Pure German, . . . 517
Battle with the Pietists, . . 518, 519

CHAPTER VIII.—*continued.*

PAGE
CHRISTIAN WOLFF—Wolff Failing before Voltaire, . . 519, 520
EMANUEL SWEDENBORG—Theology and Physical Science, . 520-522

CHAPTER IX.—THE LATTER HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

France takes the Place of England in Philosophical History, . 523-527
VOLTAIRE—His acknowledged Dominion, . . . 527-529
His War with Theocracy, . . . 529-531
CONDILLAC—The Philosopher of Sensation, . . . 531
Development of a Statue, . . . 532-535
Condillac on Aristotle and Locke, . . 535-537
HELVETIUS—The French Moralist of the Eighteenth Century, 537-539
Mackintosh on Helvetius, . . . 539, 540
JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU—The Warrior for Nature, . . 542
Emile, ... 543-549
The *Confessions*, . . 549-552
The *Contrat Social*, . . 552-557
The *Nouvelle Heloise* and its Successors, . . . 557-559
DAVID HUME—*My Own Life*, ... 560, 561
The Easy and the Abstruse Philosophy, . 562, 563
Hume as an Historian, . . . 563-565
Principles of Morals, ... 565, 566
The Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding, ... 566-576
Natural History of Religion, . . . 576-578
ADAM SMITH—The Economist, ... 578-580
THOMAS REID—The Philosopher of Consciousness, . . 580, 581
Not an Eclectic, ... 581, 582
Common Sense, ... 582, 583
Use of a Conscious Philosophy, . . 585, 586
Dangers of a Conscious Philosophy, . . 586, 587
EDMOND BURKE—The Inductive Political Philosopher, . 586
The Parody on Bolingbroke, . . 586-588
The *Inquiry concerning the Sublime and Beautiful*, ... 588-590
BURKE and the French Revolution, ... 594-596
PALEY—The Utilitarian Theologian, . . . 596
His *Moral Philosophy*, . . . 596-599
Evidences of Christianity, ... 599-601
Natural Theology, ... 601, 602
JEREMY BENTHAM—The Utilitarian without Theology, . 602, 603
His *Fragment on Government*, . . 603-606
GERMAN PHILOSOPHY IN THE NEW PERIOD, . . 606-608

CHAPTER IX.—*continued.*

PAGE
LESSING—The Union of Letters and Life, . . . 608-610
The Critic, ... 610-612
The Theologian, ... 612-616
Ernst und Falk, ... 616, 617
The *Education of the Race*, . . . 617-619
EMMANUEL KANT—The Transcendental Critic, . . 619
Kant in what sense a follower of Locke, . 620, 621
In what sense the supporter of Hume, . 621-623
Kant as an Æsthetic Philosopher, . 623-625
Kant as a Logician, . . . 625-628
Object of Kant's *Dialectic*, . . 628-630
Kant as a Moralist, . . . 630-635
Kant's relation to his Predecessors and Successors, ... 635-637
Kant's Contemporaries, . . . 637, 638
HERDER—The Humanist, ... 638-644
JACOBI—The inverted Spinozist, ... 644, 645
His intercourse with Lessing and Moses Mendelssohn, 645-647
Jacobi on Hume, ... 647, 648
Jacobi on Philosophy and Faith, . . . 648-651

CHAPTER X.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS—Morals and Metaphysics, . . 652-655
GERMANY in three Periods, ... 655
FICHTE, SCHELLING, HEGEL, ... 655-657
SCHLEIERMACHER, ... 658, 659
STRAUSS, ... 659-661
FRANCE in three Periods, ... 661
THE HISTORIANS, THE SOCIAL REFORMERS, THE ONTOLOGISTS, ... 662-664
ENGLAND in three Periods, ... 664
STUART, BENTHAM, COLERIDGE, ... 665-672
MILL'S *Logic*, HAMILTON'S *Essay on the Unconditioned*, . 672, 673
CONCLUSION, ... 673-676

MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

The two Faiths and the two Forms of Society.

1. For seven centuries Christendom and Islamism had fought: Asia had been reforming itself under the influence of the one, Europe under the influence of the other. The contrast in the principles had become continually more apparent as the opposite forms of society had developed themselves. An absolute ruler governing the world, destroying all likenesses of himself, waging war against foes, holding out rewards to the obedient—this was the subject of the Mahometan proclamation; on this ground the Mahometan despotism stood. The union of the divine with the human, the submission of the Godhead to all the conditions of mortality, Fatherhood rising above dominion, relationships implied in commands—here we have the underground of the European family and of the constitution and order of its different nations.

Characteristics of each.

Islamism in its negative form.

2. During this conflict the negative side of each of these principles often acquired terrible prominence, often made itself mightily felt in the institutions and civilization which they respectively engendered. That this should have been the case with Mahometanism was inevitable. It announced itself from the first as a protest against Christianity, so far as Christianity involved a belief in a Divine Humanity. It was *not* inevitable that the faith of the West should assume the same form of contradiction. It could not do so without belying its own origin and starting point. But it did, in fact, convert its own characteristic maxim into an excuse for building a system which was Christian in the sense of not being Mahometan, in the sense of setting at nought that part of the Mahometan belief which was identical with the Jewish.

Christianity becoming the negation of Islamism.

Blending of the Philosophies which each Faith had developed.

Signs that the age of Antagonism was passing away, or that the opposition was to assume a new shape.

3. There was a curious reaction, as we have heard, in Mahometan philosophy, when Mahometans began to have a philosophy, against the exclusiveness of the Koran; an attempt to discover somewhere or other, with the aid of pagan speculation, a link between the Absolute Ruler and the world which he had formed, even at the risk of merging Him in it. Raymond Lully, as our readers know, saw or suspected a corresponding reaction on the other side. The Christian schools, he thought, were tampering with the doctrines of Averroes. He who had given up his life to convert Islamites, trembled lest Islamites should convert the youth of Christendom. Such fears indicated a new stage in the history of the relations between the two faiths. There were other indications that this change was commencing in the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. Frederick II. had conquered Jerusalem in spite of the Popes; but it had been a conquest which the old warriors of the Cross denounced as involving a dangerous toleration of Islamism. Frederick was suspected in Sicily and in the East of sympathy with Saracenic lore and Saracenic practices. It was a more fatal sign still of the passing away of an old age, that the crusades of Louis, in whom the spirit of the old crusaders dwelt in its highest measure, were utter failures. Still more remarkable was the conspiracy of different national kings, Philip the Fair leading them, against the Order of the Templars, and the dissolution of that body which had represented the chivalry and the unity of Christendom in its opposition to the soldiers of the Prophet.

The Ottoman race.

Corresponding revolution in Christendom.

4. One would suspect the meaning of these signs if there had been no external changes in the two worlds which answered to them. But the time we are speaking of is a most notable time in Mahometan history, inasmuch as it is the commencement of the ascendancy of that Ottoman race which is in many respects so different from all the races that preceded it, and which in its social conditions was to be the complete, perhaps the final, embodiment of Islamism as an exclusive principle. Surely the change in the state of Europe which was marked by the fall of Boniface and the removal of the Papal See to Avignon, was at least as marvellous as this. The existence of a father of Christendom,—the existence of such a father in Rome, the seat of the old empire,—seemed to some the *cause* of the unity of Christendom, seemed to all the most broad and palpable indication of it. Here was the fact in the economy of the European world which stood out in broad contrast to the Mahometan succession. From this throne the decrees appeared to issue which bound the conscience of the Christendom nations. The name by which he who sat on that throne was designated, spoke of a fatherly government in

contrast with a mere arbitrary or imperial government. The high and awful titles which were sometimes given to him, though with trembling and under protest, were continual witnesses to the belief that an actual union between Heaven and earth had been established in the person of a Man. What could the shaking of such a power, the subversion of one who seemed to hold it by the highest title and with the greatest security, the removal of his successors from the seat which was so intimately blended with the very nature of their authority, involve less than an inquiry into the basis upon which that authority rested; ultimately an inquiry into the whole Christian principle; into the reason of the assumption that Humanity and Divinity had been made one?

The Papacy characteristic of Christendom as opposed to the empire of the Prophet.

The controversy of the centuries from the fourteenth to our own.

What questions it has involved.

5. From the time we are speaking of to our own, from William of Occam to Auguste Comte, this we believe has been *the* question with which philosophers have been occupied, the one which has been forced upon them by the different circumstances of the ages to which they have belonged. Does the ground of what is human lie in what is divine? If so, what is the condition of their union? How are we to discover the relation which exists between them? How are we to avoid sinking the divine in the human? How are we to avoid the crushing of the human under the divine? Is there anything personal in either? Are both merely abstractions and generalizations of our minds, merely formulas of logic, merely phrases of rhetoric? Or again, if the human has not its foundation in the divine, what is its foundation? To what must man refer himself? Is he to deduce the conditions of his being from the world about him, or from himself? What is the explanation of the fancy he has had about some alliance with the unseen? What reasonable or satisfactory history may be given of his thoughts upon this subject? How can he construct a life and a society for himself, without assuming that which is not to be assumed? In constructing this society, or scheme of life, is he to content himself with the ordinary phenomena which present themselves to him in the world? Or is it necessary that he should still introduce something of a supernatural, of course, a fictitious, machinery? These, we think, are the subjects which at different times, and in different forms, have presented themselves to the inquirers of these centuries; which would often have been evaded if it had been possible for individual men to evade them; which would have been stifled if it had been possible for statesmen or for churchmen to stifle them; but which One higher than all philosophers, statesmen, or churchmen, was setting before His creatures, because it was His desire that the solution of them should be fully known. Holding this to be the only explanation of the

Necessity for these inquiries.

How they must be pursued by those who believe in a divine education of the race.

questionings in these centuries, as of all the questionings we have considered hitherto, we must feel that it would have been a loss to mankind if any of these riddles had not been started, if any experiment for finding the answer to them, however partial and unsatisfactory, had not been made. We must desire earnestly to misrepresent no human perplexity, to deal unfairly with no one who has been exercised by it. If sometimes we may be tempted to speak impatiently of those who have merely talked and trifled with doubts that have *not* exercised them—who have produced easy off-hand determinations of them, which could not content any one to whom thought and life were something more than school disputations—we may calm if we do not suppress our indignation by remembering, that the influence of such men, however strong for a while, has been brief—that their arrogant scepticism, or their arrogant dogmatism, has been confuted by far more effectual demonstrations than any which adverse sceptics or adverse dogmatists could supply, though these may have contributed their quota, and that something has always been left behind, even by the most arid controversies, which has helped to fatten the soil, and make it productive hereafter. If we are disposed to feel even more harshly towards those who have used very earthly instruments and called them divine, for the purpose of putting to sleep the conscience and the heart which we believe a really divine power was awakening—if we are sometimes inclined to call religious persecutors for this reason by the hard name of atheists—other and nobler acts of their lives may show us that the name is unfairly bestowed—that they could do much and suffer much to assert strong and earnest beliefs which had been kindled in themselves, even when they were trying to extinguish some which were no less precious in their brethren. We may be reminded by more painful discoveries in ourselves, that we have the same disposition as they had to tread out convictions which we have not realized, and that we should do well if we could catch some of the zeal and fervour with which they struggled for those which had been imparted to them.

Temptations of the student.

How they may be overcome.

The Schools and the World must always throw light upon each other.

6. Assuming, then, as we have assumed throughout, that man is under a higher teaching than his own, and that no questions respecting the visible or invisible world, respecting nature, or himself, or God, would have been stirred in him if it had not been so, we are bound to submit this doctrine, from which so many will dissent, which few, perhaps, are willing to apply to the whole course of human history and inquiry, to the same tests which were deemed necessary in the earlier portions of our sketch. We are bound not to separate the debates in the schools from the business of the world. We are bound to seek in the progress of events for something answering to that which passed

in the hearts of men. We cannot hope to understand the man who has scorned the profane vulgar and kept them at a distance, except by comparing his speculations with the feelings and inspirations of that very vulgar, by learning what impulses were in them which were also working in him, and which he was trying, successfully or unsuccessfully, to satisfy. If we look upon God as the guide of our race, we must look on the race as more grand and important than the particular men who have faithfully or unfaithfully acted as His ministers to it. A history which should exhibit the relations of one to the other in fair and reasonable proportions, would carry its own evidence with it. The thinker and the doer would each interpret the other. What is called the spirit of an age would be seen in each of the individuals belonging to that age. A higher Spirit than this would be found to be working in all ages and to be uniting them. It is only the hint of such a history which we can even dream of giving in this sketch. Hereafter some one may be raised up to write it for the blessing of his own time and of the times to come.

A possible History of Philosophy.

Reference to the history of the thirteenth century.

7. Two eminent Franciscans have come under our notice, both members of the University of Oxford. One was Roger Bacon, the antagonist of magicians, suspected of magic; faithful to the principle of his order, condemned and imprisoned by those who governed it. The other was Duns Scotus, whose reputation for orthodoxy was high in Oxford, was consummated in Paris, who fought in the thirteenth century for the dogma which has waited for the papal sanction till the nineteenth; who in this instance, as in all others, was adhering to the maxims and habits he had inherited from St. Francis, was opposing the judgment and the system of the Dominicans. That opposition was to be *the* characteristic of Duns. The Thomists embodied the idea which had always been at work in the society of which Aquinas was the most splendid representative. Everything in that society started from the universal, proceeded to the species, terminated in the individual. Everything in Aquinas was comprehensive, systematic, deductive. The experimental tendencies of Roger Bacon expressed the method which he had learned from the strictly individualizing mind of his founder. Francis of Assisi could only look at individuals, could only rise to the universal through individuals. Thence came his genial sympathy, thence came his superstition. What Bacon transferred to physics at the peril of his character and liberty, Duns Scotus carried into metaphysics and theology, and so became the founder of the great Middle Age sect which bears his name.

The Franciscan Experimentalist.

The Franciscan Logician.

How they both preserved the type of their order.

New stage in Franciscan Philosophy.

8. These two instances will prove, if proof were wanting, if the whole history of philosophy were not a repetition of similar examples, that persons faithfully adhering to a certain maxim or

habit of thought, may yet, even in similar circumstances, work out the most different, even what might strike a bystander as the most inconsistent, results. We are therefore better prepared to find a disciple of Duns arriving at conclusions the very reverse of his, though without forsaking for an instant the Franciscan type or deviating into the method of the Dominicans. William of Occam had one or two points in common with Roger Bacon. Both were Englishmen, both grew up in a period of English history which was likely to bring forth some of the most characteristic English qualities. For any countryman of ours not to be a politician, is strange and out of nature. In the reign of Henry III.—to a less degree in the reign of his successor—the impulse to be political must have been specially strong. It was the age of Leicester, the age of the commencement of the House of Commons; it was a time in which others besides barons, in which the natives of towns, discovered that they had an interest in the government of the land. Whether such feelings penetrated into the Surrey village which gave birth to our philosopher, we cannot tell. It is at least probable that he began early to imbibe some of those thoughts about the ecclesiastical system which Grostête had shared with his friend Bacon. By entering the Order of Friars Minors, Occam may have cut himself off from some of the strictly English sympathies which had been stirring in the *secular* clergy—he may have pledged himself to speak, think, *feel*, in Latin. But his order was no hindrance to his appearing as a reformer. Rather his adherence to his order, combining with some circumstances of the time, determined him to become a reformer, and gave the character to his thoughts about reformation.

Occam's country; how it influenced his life.

Duns, not Bacon, the teacher of Occam.

9. These thoughts, however, were not to move in Bacon's direction. Occam had no vocation for physical experiments. If he heard of the Brazennose luminary when he came to Oxford, if he was in any degree attracted by the report of his courage and his persecutions, these were not arguments strong enough to turn one who was born a logician and a theologian into another line of inquiry. Duns the Irishman was the natural guide of his steps—to that guide he betook himself. What their personal relations were we have no means of ascertaining. Occam, we know, honoured his master's genius and subtlety. But when he rebelled against his decrees, he experienced, it is probable, something of that painful reaction, that inclination to revenge himself for previous homage and disappointment, which were not peculiar to the fourteenth century.

Logic and Theology; why confused in the Middle Ages.

10. We have said that Occam was born to be a logician *and* a theologian. Such a description would not apply to Duns Scotus or to any Realist, scarcely to any Nominalist of the

Middle Ages. In them, Logic and Theology were inextricably blended. The confusion lay at the very root of the scholastic philosophy. The great controversy which occupied the schoolmen, looked at on one side, was a consequence of it. What were the words with which the logician has to deal? Were they not divine sacraments? Were they not blended, inseparably blended, with the things to which they referred? If you ascended into a region above visible and tangible things, did not the words point to invisible substances? Must not every general name have such a substance corresponding to it, incorporated with it? It was only to this conclusion that the Nominalist of the old time demurred. "No," he said, "when you reach these general or universal names, *there* you come into a region of conceptions—the names are signs of these conceptions." It was *this* doctrine which awakened the dread of the theologians, a dread, it seems to us, not unreasonable. Supposing the Nominalist was right, did it not follow that all invisible things, all that had not some sensible counterpart, were mere creations or forms of the intellect? The horror of such an inference became stronger and stronger in the minds of devout and earnest men. It was more intense in the Franciscan than in the Dominican, from his habit of contemplating individual things and rising to the universal through them. It reached its climax in Duns Scotus. That acute and courageous Irishman had brought logic and theology into such a conjunction as was equally dangerous to both. Dancing on his tight-rope, he looked upon all thoughts as things. But then was there not a danger of all things becoming mere thoughts? The question might hardly present itself to one who breathed no atmosphere but the schools; it pressed with intense force upon one who like Occam was destined to be a fighter in the world.

The old Nominalism.

The theological protest against it.

11. He was able to cut the knot. His logic begins with an investigation of the nature of *signs*. We feel at once that he is looking on them from another point of view from that in which his master and his master's predecessors looked upon them. The thought, the spoken word, the written letter, are with him all signs. But they are not *sacraments*. They are not bound up with the thing to which they refer. They express *our* mind, not the mind of the Creator, about that thing. They denote what *we* have apprehended of it. Out of these apprehensions come forth the judgments, which are still ours; they are formed into a syllogism; these exercise a force on our fellows. The business of logic is to discover what the conditions are under which such apprehensions may be formed, such judgments expressed, what form they must take in order that they may be intelligible and conclusive to other minds. When, therefore, you ascend

Signs, how treated by Occam.

All names, whether denoting individuals or universals, distinct from that which they denote.

The new Nominalism.

into the region of universals, you are not obliged to devise another law for them; you have no excuse for saying that the words which indicate them are unlike the words which have reference to individual and sensible things. Both alike denote men's conceptions. The signs of the invisible are neither less nor more real than those of the visible. Strictly speaking, neither are real; both are purely nominal.

The sphere of logic.

Occam's theology, how it sustains and explains his logic.

12. So far Occam is the logician; *that* strictly and exclusively. But he was also an earnest theologian. In some respects, as we shall find presently, he was a more earnest, at least a more distinct, theologian than his master. And he must explain logically how he can vindicate this position consistently with that thorough, some would say ultra, Nominalism which he had substituted for the ultra Realism of Duns. He affirms that universals having no reality in themselves, have a reality in God; that when you speak of His nature, you discover a meaning for them which takes them out of the region of mere conceptions. Occam's modern commentators are puzzled to understand how he can maintain this position. It strikes them as a flagrant inconsistency and feebleness, either a concession to the dogmatism of his time, or the effect of an unconscious adhesion to the maxims of Scotus, even after he had deliberately abandoned them. There is an evident plausibility in this opinion; we confess that for some time it appeared to us a reasonable one. If, we said to ourselves, Occam was thoroughly convinced that words were signs of our conceptions, why should he have attached any peculiar sacredness to those conceptions when they referred to the highest and most sacred subject of all? Would it not have been safer to have been consistent? Was he not losing his reverence in attempting to preserve it? Was he not making our conceptions the measure of the inconceivable by permitting this flaw in the completeness of his system?

Occam's supposed contradiction.

His search for a real science which should not be merged in the science of names.

13. Reflecting on Occam's logic in connection with the rest of his life, it seems to us that these objections answer themselves. There is a danger, an infinite danger of mixing our conceptions of that which is highest, with the Being to whom they point. It was the danger into which the schoolmen had fallen; it was the danger which he wished to escape. But he could not escape it by only proving logic to be a science of conceptions and signs; he must affirm that there is a science which is not occupied with conceptions, or with the signs of those conceptions. He must vindicate the faith of men, that there are signs of invisible realities as well as signs of their notions about these realities, and about visible things. He must prevent sacraments from intruding themselves into logic, by showing that they had a true and proper region of their own. The circumstances of the age

demanded this double work; one part of it would have been useless, or even mischievous, without the other. Occam may not have performed either task satisfactorily; but he gave the hint of both. In doing so, we believe that he proved himself a benefactor to mankind, one who could serve the cause of truth in the world as well as in the school.

The question, what are divine signs or sacraments, forced on men's thoughts.

14. The question, what signs mean, whether any of them have a divine signification, and if any, which,—had been rudely and painfully thrust upon the consideration of ordinary men and women who knew nothing of Thomas, or Duns, or Occam. All nature, all legends, still more, the forms of ecclesiastical society, had been supposed to be pledges and sacraments of a mysterious presence. Himself one of the highest of these signs, the interpreter of all the rest, in awful majesty stood the Bishop of Rome. And now it was known that this Bishop dwelt in Rome no longer, that this sign to kings of an invisible monarchy, had become the servant of a visible king,—that this interpreter of signs and judge of men had been himself judged and condemned by one of those upon whom he had trampled. More than this was reported concerning these representatives of the Divine Majesty. It was said, that wherever righteousness might be seen, it could not be seen in them; it was said that all things at Rome had been venal, but that the court of Avignon was a still deeper sink of corruption. Such words were spoken, and were beginning to be believed by clergymen and laymen, by the learned and the vulgar, by the devout and the godless. What did they import? Was the world left bare of that which had seemed to fill every corner of it? If the most sacred image of all had lost its sacredness, what was to become of the rest? Did not they derive their sacredness from the word of this high priest of the earth? If he spoke no more, or spoke only words of evil and not of health, what had Christendom, what had mankind, to expect but the withering and destruction of all its springs of life?

Is the Bishop of Rome one? Does he represent the Divine Majesty?

How the question presented itself.

The outward and inward pestilence.

15. Europe was soon called to face this problem—to face it in the midst of outward calamities which brought it home to every door. The springs of life were in the most literal sense dried. An unparalleled pestilence affecting the bodies of men, seemed to testify of a divine curse and desertion such as their fathers had never known. In the previous century it appeared as if the Tartar had a commission to scourge and destroy Christian and Islamite alike: a more fatal enemy than Zinghis Khan was to invade every town and every household in this. Doubt, moral recklessness, despair, of course came in its train. Every moral phenomenon received its frightful explanation from the physical anguish. So the people were led to think rightly

The people and the students.

or confusedly about visible and invisible evils. Students in their closets had anticipated the doubts which common men arrived at by processes of feeling, not of reasoning. But students needed something to make them feel as well as reason. If a pestilence might not set Occam upon considering whether the Papal power was a truly divine power, whether it had a warrant to insult all other powers—he did require some embodied form of Papal pretension and usurpation to give him a practical and personal, not a merely scholastical, interest in the controversy.

John XXII.

John XXII. supplied what he wanted. Inspired by moral indignation against him, the Nominalist of the university became the sternest of Realists beyond its walls. He valued his own weapons, but he was far from despising those of a different kind and temper with which Louis of Bavaria fought.

The division in the Franciscan body.

16. Occam was loyal to his Order, loyal to its founder, in his quarrel with John XXII. The question of poverty and its limits had always threatened to be a perilous one for the Franciscans—more perilous to them than to their rivals, because they had adopted poverty more for its own sake, less as a mere instrument for the extirpation of heresy. That wealth would pour in upon the mendicants in virtue of their very mendicancy, could not be reasonably doubted by any far-seeing man, though the possibility may hardly have occurred to the unworldly Francis.

Perplexity of the question which set them at war.

That when it was bestowed, there would be the greatest perplexity about the way in which it should be used, whether it could be retained for the Order as an Order, without involving the individuals of the Order in possessions, in luxuries, in perjuries, might also have been predicted. Then arose the usual division into the worldly and the spiritual. There were the ordinary and probably the just complaints against the former, that they were prevaricating with their consciences, and departing from the meaning even more than the letter of their vows; against the others, that they were pretending to maintain a rule which could not be maintained. The opponents of the spiritual school were often able to prove that strange opinions, with a strong tendency to the exaltation of spiritual movements and inspirations at the expense of order, had grown out of their strictness. That would have been motive enough for a pope to denounce them; in the

The Pope sides with the anti-spiritual faction.

case of John it was strengthened by the radical worldliness of his own character. Occam was not worldly; but his temptation did not lie in the direction of enthusiasm. His logical acuteness must often have led him to see flaws in the arguments of the ultra defenders of poverty. Still their cause became his cause. If they were not altogether right, he was at least quite certain that the Pope was wrong.

17. He had other excuses for this opinion. John had com-

Alleged heresy of John.

Occam enters into the conflict.

His Dialogue.

mitted himself to some hasty dogmatism about the state of the departed. It was positively affirmed that a previous Pope had denounced the very propositions which he had uttered and was prepared to enforce. The spiritual Franciscans, moved against him on other grounds, eagerly whispered the charge of heresy. John, of course, hurled back the insinuation in thunders not less loud than those which had been wont to issue from the Seven Hills. How Occam might, under other circumstances, have treated the Pope's sentiment, it is impossible to say. His chivalry was aroused on behalf of one of the most conspicuous members of his order who was made the victim of a Bull; and the proposition, "A Pope may be a heretic," was so tempting a one on general grounds, that the particular offence may easily have assumed a blackness not its own in his eyes. In one of his largest and, probably, of his most effective works, the proofs against John occupy the second of three parts, the first and third of which deal with topics far more serious and permanently interesting.

Occam undertakes to state different opinions, not to arbitrate between them.

Whether he adopted this method from Prudence.

The nature of the questions discussed makes his object clear.

18. Occam's Dialogue is, according to old precedent, between a master and a pupil. The pupil has been very clamorous to hear a number of difficult problems discussed. He does not want, he says, that they should be solved for him. He does not want even to know what solution his master adopts. He only wishes to be acquainted with the opinions of different doctors, that he may compare them fairly, and not be misled by any partiality. Under these conditions Occam, with the usual profession of reluctance and compulsion, girds himself to the task. The alarming questions which are started might raise the suspicion, that he adopted the method which he makes the imaginary interlocutor suggest, in order to escape the risk of expressing a positive judgment. But further reading will induce every reasonable person to acquit him of this cowardice. There never can have been a doubt about his meaning in his pupil's mind: we have sufficient proof that there never was a doubt about it in any mind. He was openly committed to the cause of Louis, as well as of the Spiritual Franciscans—equally the foes of the Pope. One who raises such questions as these—Whether it is possible for the College of Cardinals to be heretics? Whether it is possible for a council to be heretical? Whether it is possible for the Church of Rome to be heretical? in addition to *the* question, Whether it is possible for a Pope to be heretical?—must mean mischief, even if the arguments in the negative which he produces were equal in weight and subtlety to those in the affirmative, even if the plaintiff were not admitted to the dangerous privilege of a reply. What though no decree was pronounced, was it not a greater blow to the idea

of infallibility that the reader himself was virtually called to decide amidst such various and conflicting evidence, whether those to whom he had looked up as judges might not be criminals?

The subject of the first book.

The Canonists and the Theologians.

19. Occam was quite aware that this apparent contradiction was involved in his reasoning. He did not blink it—he was anxious that his readers should not. The first book of the first part of this treatise is devoted to a controversy, the importance of which we may not at first appreciate. Two classes of men are brought before us, who, we did not perhaps know, were opposed to each other. The Canonists and the Theologians, one or other, it is assumed, must determine such questions as these—"What constitutes catholicity? What constitutes heresy? Who is the catholic? Who is the heretic?" Which *ought* to decide them? We are overwhelmed with reasons in favour of each of the contending parties. As we examine them, we become aware of Occam's extreme jealousy of the Canonists and of his profound reverence for Theology. By comparing what he says with the events and history of the time, we perceive the reason of his dislike as well as the vital significance to him of a name, which the modern student of philosophy often regards with far more animosity than that with which it is contrasted.

Glorification of Ecclesiastical Law.

Celestine and Boniface.

Victory of the Lawyer over the Saint.

The French Lawyer matched against the Roman Lawyer.

20. An accurate knowledge of Canon Law—a skill in interpreting it, and turning it to practical account—had been the basis on which the reputation of most of the recent Popes had stood. There had been one great exception. The Franciscan Celestine was guiltless of any acquaintance with Jurisprudence; he was raised to his office simply for his saintliness. His resignation extended the maxim, *Cedant arma togæ*, to the spiritual soldier and the spiritual legist. The man who had trained himself to conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, yielded to Boniface, who was said, justly or libellously, by his contemporaries, to be on good terms with all three, because no one was so well disciplined as he was in the lore and the arts of the ecclesiastical forum. Then came the Nemesis. That which was upheld by legal formulas, it was found, could fall by them. The word Canon was shown to carry no charm with it. The pleas of Nogaret had as much power as the counter-pleas of Boniface. The law of France could match itself against the law of the Roman Consistory. It was a short struggle. The triumph was achieved. The French King had no further motive to disparage the weapon in the papal hands which had proved so effectual in his own. It was an age of Lawyers. By legal quirks Edward I. sought to overthrow the liberties of Scotland, just as by legal quirks Philip had defied the ecclesiastical power, and destroyed the Templars. Were not the Popes showing their

conformity with the spirit of the age, as well as adhering to the traditions of the past, when they made the most of a system which, if it had failed once, had generally been successful; which appeared to give the authority of a long prescription to any claims they might put forth; which was an answer to the charge that their power was arbitrary; which was especially desirable, now that they had lost the prestige of the old city? John XXII. relied upon the Canonists. They were his champions against his imperial enemy. Why were they not competent to decide all spiritual controversies?

Special need of the Canonists to the Popes at Avignon.

How the Theologian was to be distinguished from the Canonist.

21. The main object of Occam's first book is to show cause why they were not. The veil which conceals the author's opinions is even thinner and more transparent than it is commonly; they break forth more than once in vehement indignation. But the exposure of the claims of the Canonist is to us of less importance than the vindication of the claims of the Theologian. The characters had been confounded. How could they be distinguished? The Theologian must have another *book* for his guidance and nourishment than that which the Canonist reverenced, and on which he fed. An assertion of the distinct authority of the Bible as the test of heresy—of heresy being predicable only of those who reject its direct statements or principles—is, therefore, a necessary part of Occam's treatise. Various questions of course arise as to the canonical and apocryphal books—as to the kind and amount of deviation from the first which involves heresy—as to the inferences which may or may not be deduced from the text. On these various opinions are produced; the conclusion left by them on the reader's mind is more or less satisfactory. *This* conclusion certainly remains—that the Theologian, if he is to maintain his position and his name against the Canonist, must regard his book as having in it a power of self-interpretation which exempts it from the peril of falling under the power of the very persons from whom it is proclaimed as the deliverer; and that he must receive it as a witness concerning the acts and wills of a living and present Being; therefore as generically distinct from the rules and decrees of which the rival volumes consisted.

The ultimate Court of Appeal; where was it to be found?

22. These maxims, whether or not Occam was able consistently to maintain them, could alone justify his rebellion against the traditions of the Canonists, and his assertion of a permanent Theological Science, which is not merely separate from those traditions, but a safeguard against them; pointing to a Court of Appeal against Cardinals, Popes, Councils. Such a Court of Appeal did not surely dwell in the understanding of some ideal Theologian, or in the understanding of all the Theologians who

Force of the word Theologian.

Dante's right to it, on what grounded.

The English Doctor, and the Italian Poet.

had commented upon Scripture, or had applied the maxims they had found there to the practice of life. If there was such an ideal Theologian, why should not the Bishop of Rome be he? If there was such an accumulation of opinions and practical results, where could they be sought for better than in the Canons? But if the Theologian had a vocation, and if the word which designated him was not delusive, there must be One who spoke to men, who made Himself known to men. Was there no Court of Appeal in Him? Was there no refuge in Him from Popes, Doctors, Cardinals, Councils? The poet Dante had claimed to be called a great Theologian, precisely because he had borne witness that there was; because he had referred the crimes of those whom he reverenced as the appointed ministers of God, to His tribunal; because he had believed that the lowest circle in Hell was for those who had the highest trusts in this world and had abused them. Occam's theology is, of course, infinitely harder and drier than that of Dante; but it has the same foundation. The protest against earthly canons, and an earthly expounder of them, is the assertion that there are everlasting Canons and an everlasting Judge. .

Occam's Eight Questions.

The Pope and the Emperor.

The direct descent of Lay Power from God.

Occam's Questions mark an epoch in Political Science.

23. The Eight Questions of Occam bear more directly on the controversy between the Pope and the Emperor. The *First* is, "Can the Spiritual and Lay power dwell in the same person? The *Second*, Whether the supreme Lay Power derives its own special property directly from God? The *Third*, Is it clear that the jurisdiction committed to the Emperor is given by Christ through the Pope and the Roman Church? The *Fourth*, Has a King of the Romans, or an Emperor, *being elected*, his power immediately from God? The *Fifth*, Does an hereditary Prince derive his power over temporals from the consecrating oil of the Priest, or only some spiritual endowment? The *Sixth*, Is he subject to him who crowns him? The *Seventh*, Does he lose his title if he is crowned by some other Archbishop than the ordinary one? The *Eighth*, Has a regularly and formally elected Emperor or King of the Romans the same functions as a hereditary Sovereign? The discussion of questions such as these, more even than dogmatical conclusions respecting them, would insure an entirely different estimation of the lay or civil Sovereign from that which the Canonist had encouraged, and had assumed to be the Divine one. Occam's Questions mark a very striking epoch in Political Science, one which ought to be better understood, if it were only that we might be more prepared for the consideration of the later English politicians, Hobbes and Locke, and of the relation in which their theories of Government stand to their theories on Morals and Metaphysics. Occam, it will be perceived, sought to withstand the insolent ecclesiastical

He is the very reverse of a Secularist.

His defence of kings and emperors.

pretensions of his time, not by treating the foundation of society as less Divine, as more the result of mere convention than it had been regarded by his opponents. His weapon against them is the assertion that the portion of social life which they had despised as merely secular, which many of them had been inclined to give over to the devil, had as high claims to Divinity as their own. He is, as we have said already, no less theological in this region than when he is examining who are Catholics and who are Heretics. He would be illogical, inconsistent with his own maxims, unable to expose the priestly arrogance, if he had assumed any position except this.

In the best sense a defender of the sacerdotal order.

24. Nor are we willing to admit that Occam forgot his own office as a priest or submitted to any impeachment of its dignity, that he might pay compliments to the Imperial power or win its favours. With his judgment of what John XXII. was, with his knowledge of what the papal court had been, and of the effect it was producing on the morality of every country in Europe, he must have felt that he was saving the sacerdotal order from the profoundest moral degradation —that he was doing what in him lay that it should not be powerless for good, instead of being mighty only for mischief;—when he resisted the pleas by which the Canonists had endeavoured to set it above kings only that it might become their mimic and their slave. If the priesthood was to be any witness for justice and righteousness, for a kingdom of heaven established among men, the time had come when some one must testify of the causes that were making it an instrument of imposture and unrighteousness, a very minister of the kingdom of hell. It would indeed have been strange if Occam's eagerness to assert the sacredness of the jurisdiction of the lay sovereigns had never led him to enlarge unduly the limits of that jurisdiction. It required centuries of practical experiments made in the most different circumstances, to settle in some degree what spiritual influence can do, as well as when it intrudes on ground not its own. Marriage, the debateable land between the two regions, was rashly claimed by Occam for the imperial power. By making that claim he damaged his cause, and lost in some degree his hold upon the conscience of his readers. The true moral influence of the Papacy had consisted mainly in the protests it had borne against the violation of domestic life by the kings. Its own treasons against that life were soon to draw upon it some of the storms of popular indignation which it could least withstand. It was therefore most unfortunate for Occam and for Louis that they contrived to revive that old prestige for their enemies and to abate this rising wrath. It

His desire to claim marriage for the civil magistrate.

was one proof among others that there was something feeble in the position of these allies, ably as it was defended by at least one of them; that the Franciscan schoolman with all his learning could not speak to the heart of the nations; that German Imperialism never could be, as it never had been, the adequate antagonist of Italian or French Priestcraft.

Occam's indirect services to physical science.

25. That Occam has exercised a great influence on *Philosophy* in the large sense of that word, cannot, we think, be doubted. Though he never meddled with physical studies, as such, he did much to break those logical fetters by which Physics as much as Theology, were bound. His Nominalism was the assertion that a science exists purely for Names; it was therefore a step towards the separation of Real sciences from this. Occam perceived that Theology had a real *invisible* object, not to be enslaved by men's theories and conceptions. With a Roger Bacon at Oxford,—with all the new experience of Nature which the coming centuries were to bring forth,—how certain it was that in due time some method would be discovered of examining *visible* objects, as they are in themselves, not as we make them by the impressions of our senses, or the conclusions of our intellects. Englishmen have a right to claim Occam as one of the instruments in this mighty scientific revolution, which it was the especial privilege of her sons to accomplish.

His influence on the religious movements of his own time more doubtful.

26. Whether he contributed much to the *moral* revolution which was commencing in the fourteenth century, and which was nowhere proceeding more rapidly than in his own country, is not equally clear. On the one hand, the fact that a Franciscan, a school doctor, a profound theologian, had questioned, *as* a mendicant, *as* a schoolman, *as* a divine, the decrees of Popes and Canonists, must have produced a startling effect on many who could not appreciate his arguments, who did not know what they were. When there were so many practical reasons for doubting if the ecclesiastical powers were indeed spiritual powers, the merest rumour that one who had looked into all the theoretical grounds on which these powers rested had found them untenable, may have shaken many an implicit believer, may have given courage to many a hesitating reformer. The Wycliffites in England must have heard with especial delight that their learned countryman upheld the Bible as the decisive authority which could alone convict any of heresy, and by which the highest dogmatist must be judged. But these same Wycliffites will have shrunk at the recollection that the champion of the Scriptures was a mendicant. They will have feared their enemies even, nay most, when they were bringing gifts to them. Wycliffe was a Realist at Oxford, probably a fiercer Realist at

How it may have acted.

How it must have been limited.

Lutterworth. He will have told his followers that Nominalists, however they might appeal to the Bible, did not care for it as those cared for it whose consciences were burdened, and to whom it witnessed of a present deliverer. The Bible spoke to the tradesmen of the English towns, to the ploughmen of the villages, as fathers, husbands, brothers. They were sure it must be meant to speak to them in their own tongue, because the people it brought before them were fathers, husbands, brothers, like themselves. All their divinity was connected with these human relationships, unfolded itself out of them. The friar and doctor must needs therefore be out of harmony with their most living convictions, with those in which their love for reformation had its birth.

The Bible: what it was to common Englishmen.

27. If this defect separated Occam from the Reformers of his own land, it might rather have been a point of sympathy between him and a class of men, remarkable in all respects, specially interesting to a historian of philosophy, who appeared at the same period in Germany. Most of our readers will have heard of the mystics of the fourteenth century. They will, perhaps, be familiar with some of their names. They may have been told that their doctrine bore a great resemblance to that of Johannes Erigena, whose book on the Division of Nature we reviewed at some length when we were speaking of the ninth century. They may have been also startled by the information that the most advanced, the most purely intellectual of modern German schools,—that which theologians in general regard with the greatest apprehension,—claims these mystical divines as its spiritual ancestors. Hence they will probably have received into their minds a general impression that these teachers were theologians who united much of old and of new heresy; crude philosophy with extravagant faith. We trust they will not be content with these fragments of information and opinion respecting men who at least deserve to be understood. All that is said of them may be true—may apply at least to a portion of their body; but the different reports require to be sifted, examined, meditated upon; or they will mislead us, not only respecting that time, but respecting our own, and indeed respecting all great periods of moral and metaphysical inquiry.

Transition to the German mystics.

Supposed connection with writers of the ninth and nineteenth centuries.

28. Occam, even when most busy with mundane affairs, never abandons the method and habits of college disputation. But we must not suppose that the Mendicant Orders had forgotten their original vocation. If they possessed the principal chairs in the universities, they were yet essentially popular preachers. In this respect the Dominican was not different from the Franciscan; his name even more constantly recalled to him and to

The order of preachers.

Use of the popular talent.

The friar learning the wants of the man.

the world for what end he begged, and of whom he was to beg. Perhaps he may not have resorted less than the Minorite to the legend, the picture, the play. Appeals to the senses and the fancy will have seemed to him the fit, possibly the sole, instruments for acting on the vulgar; there will have been brothers who cultivated these arts principally, knowing little more of Aquinas than the greatness of his name; there may have been some who found an agreeable relief from their severer studies in mere religious entertainments. But what if they should discover in the *people* a craving for lore of quite a different kind? What if the heart and flesh of the peasant or the handicraftsman should cry out for a living God, and the cry should reach the ears of the teacher who was about to give him stories or images that recalled only dead things and persons? What if that cry should call up echoes in the spirit of the friar himself; if he should discover that neither the frivolous story nor the *Summa Theologiæ* could content *him*, because he was not only a friar, but a man? What if the glazed eyes of human beings passing out of this world, in the black sickness, should look into the infinite with a strange evidence that they were in search of something *there*, which visible likenesses did not reveal; what if he who came to administer the final unction might begin to suspect that the sick and healthy, the layman and the priest, had need of an unction from One that was holier than he?

The change.

29. Indications that feelings were awake in the people which could not be met by the ordinary resources of the preacher—which theatrical starts, jokes, tears, could not satisfy—had forced themselves upon the attention of the rulers of the church. The Orders had given birth to societies which were accused—often rightly accused—of being the promoters of disorders. Asceticism had passed, as of old, into Antinomianism. Ancient heresies had burst out among the disciples of those who were ever devising contrivances against heresy. The Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit were exhibiting the results of that levelling tendency which both the orders had nourished, which was sure to break loose some day or other from their limitations, which would at last invade the distinction of layman and priest, as it had invaded the distinction of noble and peasant; which would give a further and more complete development to the idea of female dignity and equality, than the canonization of females and the worship of the Virgin had given already. Perhaps the humanism of the Franciscan was more answerable for these movements than the theology of the Dominican. But *his* danger might arise from his security. To him were committed the powers and terrors of the Inquisition—his function was to discover how men's spiritual imaginations and necessities were

drawing them away from the government and tradition of the church. In fulfilling that vocation, or in pursuing the studies which were to qualify him for fulfilling it, he might himself become unawares a brother of the Free Spirit, more apparently a heretic, even perhaps more really a heretic, than those whom he was to detect and to exterminate. The history of Master Eckart is the best illustration of this process, as he is the best representative of one form of the fourteenth century mysticism.

How a Dominican might pass into a heretic.

30. According to the best reports he was born in Saxony. Having devoted himself to a scholastic life, he went of course to Paris and became a teacher in the college of St. James; one of the Jacobins. Very learned he is said to have been learned above all his contemporaries in the philosophy of Aristotle. Dr. Karl Schmidt, who has done much in our times to revive the knowledge of him, is puzzled a little by this statement. Eckart, he remarks, deviated very widely from Aristotle afterwards. Must not some seeds of disaffection to him have been sown in Paris? May he not have encountered there some Beghard teacher, who led him to doubt the existing canons of philosophical, if not theological, orthodoxy? He honestly admits that there is no evidence of the fact; nay, that Eckart went afterwards to Rome during the strife between Boniface and Philip, considering the Pope, not the king, as his master; that he received the degree of doctor in theology in Rome; that he was appointed the Dominican provincial of Saxony; that he was confirmed in that office in the year 1304, by a convention of his order at Toulouse. In the three years following he had given such proofs of his zeal and vigour in enforcing discipline, that he was named Vicar-General of Bohemia, with ample powers to enforce any changes and reforms which the circumstances of the order in that region might make necessary. He can as yet surely have had no dangerous propensities or associates. He desired to do the inquisitorial work thoroughly. Faithful no doubt he thought himself, as others thought him, to Aristotle, to the Pope, and to Dominic.

Master Eckart.

Theologisc · Studien und Kritiken, vol. for 1839. Art. Meister Eckart. (663 744.)

Eckart's history.

Eckart as an Inquisitor.

31. We meet with him next on the Rhine, first at Strasburg, then at Cologne. Many years have elapsed since he was in Bohemia. Other things have changed; certainly a mighty change has come over Master Eckart. He is surrounded by a band of cordial disciples, who drink in his words, and like himself, deliver them to the people. Two of these pupils were to become known hereafter; one of them was to exercise no slight power over the life of Germany. *Suso* and *Tauler* both are Dominicans, trained in the straitest sect of mediæval religion.

Eckart and his disciples.

yet both aspire to be members of another fraternity. The name of "FRIENDS OF GOD" begins to be used as their designation; members of different orders, clergy and laymen, are apparently included within it.

The Friends of God.

The title very significant.

32. A name may often tell more than long speculations. The name by which Eckart, Tauler, Suso, and their companions described themselves, or were described by others, expresses that which they were seeking for; the thought which penetrated their teachings and gave them their form and colour; their relation to the church and the heretics; their oldest and their newest faith. Religious men often fix upon some sentence out of a religious book—especially on some text in Scripture—as having shaped their lives. It is not difficult after reading even a few fragments of Eckart, a few discourses of Tauler, to determine *the* sentence which had moulded their minds and their society. They are those memorable words in the fifteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel; *Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth. But I have called you* FRIENDS, *for whatsoever I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.* A time, we apprehend, occurred in the life of Eckart when this passage started out of the page full armed and mastered his whole being. How it mingled with his previous convictions —how it transformed them,—we find it easier to guess from the actual records of his life than from any suppositious with which his biographers have endeavoured to fill up the blanks in those records.

The cry for spiritual freedom.

33. Dominic learnt that mendicancy was necessary to the church of the thirteenth century, while he was seeking to put down the heretics who complained of her wealth. The heretics whom Eckart encountered whilst he was fulfilling his Dominican duties and following his Dominican traditions, complained of ecclesiastical wealth only as a part of ecclesiastical *tyranny;* they maintained that God had called men to freedom, and that the Church was holding them in slavery. May he not have asked himself whether the Church in that day should not make an effort for the purpose of removing *this* scandal; whether the duty of making it did not devolve on his Order? He may have found the office of an Inquisitor a very ineffectual, by degrees a very loathsome one. He may have tried—his duties demanded this of him—to argue the case with the criminals; he may have been able to dispose of their objections and yet have been inwardly confounded by them. Then recurring to his own proper functions as a theologian—dwelling on all which that word implied—he may have considered whether he had not allowed certain notions borrowed from pagan philosophy, certain

Could not the church meet it.

Thoughts of a Dominican

formulas of logic, to confine the spirit which Christ had come to emancipate, to interfere between man and his Creator. Clearly these notions and this logic had no hold on the peasant; he did not listen to them, or care for them. They were good in Latin; they did not translate well into the people's tongue. The man of God must throw them aside sometimes; might he not always? They were fetters on the people; were they not fetters upon *himself*? To be more completely a man of God must he not learn the secret of that intercourse, that friendship, that real knowledge, of which the Divine Apostle had spoken, nay, which his Master had promised to his disciples?

Theology confined by the Categories.

Search for a friend.

34. We were quite aware that the mode of tracing the steps in Eckart's mind, by which he passed from the most learned of Aristotelians, apparently also the most exact of disciplinarians, into one of the Friends of God, the ally of Beghards, the assertor of startling doctrines—will surprise many, because it represents him as throwing off philosophical notions as a chain on his theology, whereas he would be ordinarily conceived of as escaping from Theology to Philosophy. But this is a difficulty which we have already encountered in considering that theory of the life of Johannes Erigena which has been promulgated by one of the most accomplished Frenchmen of our day. The author of the book on the Division of Nature, it may be remembered, is treated by M. Guizot as a philosophical rebel against the theology of the ninth century. We endeavoured to show from the book on which the charge is founded, that he was rebelling in the interest of theology against those categories of Aristotle or Boethius with which the Carlovingian schools were binding all studies, human and divine. The Pantheism which was imputed to him as a consequence of his philosophical freedom grew, it seemed to us, out of his impatience of the limits with which the popular Latin philosophy was circumscribing the nature of God. We did not deny the perils into which he was brought; but we believed that he fell into them in his attempt to avoid perils as great, and of a precisely opposite nature to those which the hearers of M. Guizot must have supposed him to dread. With respect to Eckart the case is even stronger. Dr. Schmidt speaks of his whole line of thought as purely theological (*rein theologisches*). He says so, with a perfect knowledge of the admiration which he has received from the Hegelian school, and after a careful study of his writings. He appears indeed to assume that he had some knowledge of his Irish predecessor, of which, in Ritter's opinion, there is no trace in his writings, and which it is not easy to imagine how he could have obtained. He belonged to a different race from Johannes; he can only have heard of him in Paris, and there he must have learnt to regard him with

Reference to Guizot's notion of John Scotus.

Pantheism of Scotus, how it arose.

Application of these observations to Eckart.

Differences between Erigena and Eckart.

Aristotelian dislike and Dominican horror. Their circumstances were altogether different. Johannes knew nothing of any popular language or of popular preaching. But they were alike in this one respect, that by different methods they were led to face the question, whether the Absolute Being can be conceived in the terms and forms of earthly logic; whether, if not, the knowledge of Him is denied to the creature who is said in Scripture to be formed after His likeness and to be satisfied only when he awakes up after that likeness?

What was common to them.

Metaphysicians and Moralists.

35. It must not be concealed that there is another resemblance between Johannes Erigena and Master Eckart. We spoke of the former as one of the acutest metaphysicians whom the world has ever produced, but as falling far below numbers of very inferior men as a moral teacher. By the word *inferior* we did not merely understand men who had not the same intellectual depth and subtlety. We believe that there have been far *worse* men than Johannes in character and principle who are safer moral guides, who have never uttered the same dangerous maxims. It may appear strange after all we have said of Eckart's connection with the people, and of this connection being in great measure the key to his life, if we apply the same remark to him. How could a great metaphysician come into contact with the hearts of peasants and handicraftsmen? Must not his charm for them lie in those very qualities, in that direct practical morality in which we assume him to have been deficient? The question is a very interesting one. It cannot be settled by *à priori* considerations. It must be brought to the test of experience. That experience, we believe, would show in nearly every age that the religious teaching which has commended itself most to the hearts of the people, has had in it a strong metaphysical element. To say that formality, the artifices of rhetoric or dialectics, belong to the refined and not to the vulgar, is to say just what Eckart and the friends of God did say. But they also said, and we think proved, that that in theology which lies *beneath* these, not that which is nearer to the surface than they are, is what appeals to men as men, and that the most apparently practical teaching which ignores this, will never stir the hearts and consciences of any *except* the refined and the artificial. What we believe is the great, the extreme danger of honest men who are trying to declare to the people that which they have themselves heard and seen, is that they should overleap the great laws and maxims of divine and human morality, as well as the mere forms of the understanding; that they should bring the deepest truths without their proper and necessary media before the human spirit, and so that they should become pantheistical in a sense much more serious than is sometimes

Which was Eckart?

Whether the people, as such, abhor metaphysics or seek for them.

Temptation of the preacher.

given to that word, confounding not the world with God, but man himself with God, reproducing the falsehood along with the truth of Buddhism in the very heart of Christendom. Of this tendency Eckart is the most notable specimen perhaps that history offers to us.

Eckart's character.

36. All testimonies represent his life as pure and devout. He had no motive to undermine any admitted moral maxim from want of conformity to it. As little was he restless under ecclesiastical rules; he submitted to them cheerfully; he seems to have been less scandalized than one might wish him to have been, by the corruptions and abuses of the priestly order in his time. The freedom which he sought was precisely that of which the text we have referred to speaks; the freedom of a friend as opposed to the state of a servant. But as friendship with an unseen Being must be a friendship of the spirit, all external acts were treated as servile. Statements that they are so, and consequent disparagements of them appear again and again in Eckart's discourse; they constitute the most *apparently* offensive passages in it. Separated from other passages as broad and direct which we shall speak of presently, they were open to the greatest abuse; and being put forth in short telling sentences of popular German, they would of course be repeated and applied by many who understood little of the principles from which they were derived or of the explanation of them which was given by the actions of the preacher.

Not impatient of rule.

His treatment of outward acts.

How he treated internal acts.

37. Unfortunately, the qualifications which these sayings received from other parts of Eckart's doctrines were themselves liable to as great misconstruction. Friendship with God being the one object which the spirit of man seeks, how must it be attained? If there was a danger before of exalting internal feelings and states of mind above outward and visible acts, these feelings and states of mind must now themselves be treated with scorn, they must submit to be lost if the man really aspires to the highest friendship and communion. *Himself* must die utterly; the object must be all in all. No language had been more frequent than this in the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Scripture justified it. The very idea of love appeared to involve it. Eckart therefore was sure that he was here on safe ground. He advanced fearlessly on it. He gave utterance to propositions concerning the utter indifference which a man should feel about everything which concerned himself, his own reputation, his own holiness, his own salvation. The courage of Eckart is perhaps the best argument for the innocence of his intentions; if he had had some dark purpose he would have been far more prudent. But he was not aware how much his old self was affecting him when he appeared to be most

Justification of his language about self-annihilation.

Eckart an Aristotelian logician even when abjuring Aristotle.

Consequences of his intellectualism.

casting it off; how the Aristotelian of Paris lived in the preacher of Cologne. Eckart was a logician by temperament, by habit, by education. He proved it by his recklessness in following out conclusions. He proved it by the sternly intellectual character he gave to that doctrine of self-abnegation, which had appeared in other days specially to involve a surrender of the intellect. Why must a man be nothing? Because he loses himself in that which he *knows*. How wonderful then is this *knowledge!* How wonderful the capacity for knowing! That must be the very man! Nay, must it not be more? For what is the man who can thus identify himself with GOD?

Christian Buddhism.

The Christian Mystics.

Their connection with human relations.

Eckart in search of the Absolute.

37. Here the Buddhism of Eckart comes forth in its fullness. We use the word deliberately; not the least believing that he was ever in communication with Buddhists; not the least doubting the sincerity with which he made his Christian confession. No traditions from one part of the earth or another *could* have brought him either to the strong conviction by which he was possessed, or to the alarming inferences which he deduced from them. The faith which he showed in his Christian lore, and the use he made of it, are some of the most instructive facts in the history of his mind. He had acknowledged a Trinity, an Eternal Son of God, an incarnation, a fall of man. These had been for a long while *tenets* which he received from books, which he could defend against opponents, which he could enforce on heretics. A time came when he knew that they must be more than this; or that they were not truths, as the Church said they were, on which the universe and the life of man rested. Neither the world nor he could rest upon an *opinion;* it could only rest on that which *is*. In the Bible Theology the mystery of divine relations is unfolded by a wonderful process of human relations. Of these Eckart knew nothing. His Dominican life had been the renunciation of them. *Friendship* he could conceive of; the brotherhood of the Order made that a practical reality to him. In this new stage of his divine perceptions, he could rise to the idea of *divine* friendship; it became the absorbing one of his life. But the names of Father, Brother, Husband, were figures, mere indications of something deeper. The Trinity, the Son of God, the Incarnation, were profound realities to his heart and conscience. But when he strove to think of them and speak of them, they resolved themselves into certain conditions of the human intellect by which it ascended into the divine region; or they merely floated upon the surface of the waters, beneath which lay the unfathomable abyss of the absolute. It is perfectly justifiable to call this state of mind Christian Buddhism, not using the phrase in any

opprobrious sense, but rather indicating how near we are to some of the rocks and quicksands which we most dread, and what path there is from them by which the idolatrous nations as well as we ourselves may be led to solid ground.

The gulf of Nothingness.

38. When Eckart had gone so far, the next step was inevitable. He was forced to ask himself, as the Buddhists had asked themselves, "What is this abyss of Being into which I have plunged? What is this Absolute for the sake of which I am to suffer self-annihilation? What can I call it?" That Eckart should have ventured to use the words *God is nothing*, might make any one shudder. But to quote half a sentence is slanderous. He said GOD is *icht und nicht*. He meant to say that He is the very reverse of Nothing, as well as Nothing; a better and wholesomer expression, from its very strangeness, than if he had said, He is All and Nothing. That would have been pure vagueness; the other language kept its hold of personality. It indicated the embarrassment and confusion of the soul when it was drawing near to God; it did not belie the whole meaning of Eckart's words and acts, that He was a Friend. But there were maxims involved in this statement, or rather in the habits of thought which led to it, that cannot be explained away, and that must have been injurious to Eckart himself as well as to his disciples. In resolving that God should be without limitation, he lost also the limitations of right and wrong, of good and evil. The Absolute, the All-Comprehending, must swallow up every distinction. Righteousness, justice, even truth, must not live, but be buried, in Him. Were we special pleaders for Eckart, we might easily challenge some of his judges to show that under the names of power and sovereignty, or of fixed and eternal decrees, they have not committed the same enormity, and yet avoided the stigma which attaches to him. But we are not his apologists. What was right in his words will be vindicated by another tribunal, what was evil will be burnt up in other than human fires. Even in his own days—when the inquisition was so active—the character he had borne, the simplicity of his life, the nearness of some of his most dangerous words to words which orthodox men had used, his solemn assurance that he meant them in no sense which the Church condemned, appear to have protected him from any tremendous censure. The Archbishop of Cologne suspended him. He continued to preach. His case was remitted to the Pope. No papal censure came forth against his doctrines till after his death. The Bull which contained it appears to have been directed more against the Beghards and Brethren of the Free Spirit who had adopted language similar to his,

How Eckart was kept from it.

Loss of moral distinctions.

The Bull against Eckart.

than against himself. He is declared in it to have died in reconciliation with the Church. So far as can be made out, the reconciliation did not involve a retractation of any sentiments he had uttered, but a profession of his willingness to retract them if there was anything in them contrary to the orthodox faith.

Tauler at Strasburg. 39. The exact date of Eckart's death is not known. The posthumous Bull against him appeared in 1329. Eleven years after that time *John Tauler* was preaching with great popularity in Strasburg. There can be little doubt that he regarded Eckart as his master, that he followed in the main his line of thought, that he belonged to the same circle of *Friends of God.* It is probable that he was less audacious and less original than his predecessor, and by degrees had learnt to deliver sentiments with much rhetorical skill and emphasis, which were not His preaching. the expressions of anything that he had himself realized. How easily might the bold starts and daring inconsistencies of Eckart be represented by such a pupil, till they passed for remarkable utterances, characteristic of a certain school, attractive to crowds, useless for any high purpose, mischievous as all idle words on The Layman. great topics are mischievous. So thought a certain layman who is said to have come from "the Oberland," and to have visited Strasburg for the express purpose of hearing Tauler and conversing with him. This layman has been identified with one Who he was. Nicolas of Basle, a Waldensian, who was much persecuted by the Inquisition, and at last suffered death for heresy. Neander expresses a not unnatural pleasure that German criticism had for once raised a half mythical into an historical personage, instead of reducing history into myth. But there are difficulties about the hypothesis, and Böhringer of Zurich in his recent work on the German Mystics offers strong evidence for rejecting it. Waldensian or not, this layman was certainly a "Friend of God," and took the privilege of one in his dealings with the popular Dominican preacher. He humbly begged to hear a lecture from him on the degrees of Church Perfection. He listened with attention, but refused to wait for the continuation of the discourse at the next festival. Suddenly the relations of the His rebukes. disciple and the doctor are changed. The layman appears as a severe critic; he taxes Tauler with Phariseeism and formality, with uttering words to which his heart does not respond, with laying burdens on other men's shoulders which he does not lift himself with his finger. Such accusations would have been wounding to any teacher; they must have cut to the quick a disciple of Eckart who supposed that he had found a way out of all formalism and Phariseeism. But Tauler was no willing self-deceiver; he was essentially a true man. Too much stress, we think, has been laid on the humility which he showed in bearing the reproofs of a layman. The nature of his profession, the tacit obligation of the society of which he was a member, must have made the assumption of the man from the Oberland less extraordinary to him than a like assumption would seem to a clergyman of the English Church, perhaps to an English dissenting minister, in the nineteenth century. It was the subject-matter of the exhortation, not the person who delivered it, which made Tauler's submissiveness admirable. He confessed the justice of the charge against him, he submitted willingly to the discipline which his reprover enjoined, including a two years' silence. He passed through intense mental and bodily agonies; he lost the favour of his convent; when he came forth to preach again his words had forsaken him, tears flowed forth instead; by degrees his speech returned, and it was felt to proceed from a man who had actually visited the world of darkness and the world of light concerning which he discoursed.

Tauler's behaviour.

Effect of Tauler's change.

40. This story, told as it is with exquisite simplicity and truthfulness, is highly valuable for the illustration of the subject we are considering, as well as for more important ends. Did Tauler cease to be a mystic after this change had been wrought in him? Was the effect of the layman's exhortations this,—that he cast off the teaching he had received from Eckart, and became what would be called in our days a purely practical divine? So little do the facts support *this* conclusion, that some have hastily deduced precisely the opposite one from them. It has been supposed, from the phrase "illuminated doctor," which was bestowed on Tauler in the second stage of his life, that his mysticism began from this time; that previously he had been running in the regular Dominican rut. This last opinion we have shown (following in our statements those who have studied Tauler's life and writings most carefully*) to be entirely untenable. He was a disciple of Eckart, and therefore a full grown mystic long before the visit of the Swiss. That visit certainly did not diminish his respect for his old master or lead him to repudiate his method of thought. Most probably, as his mind became purer and less self-seeking, he confessed benefits from the lessons he had received in earlier years of which he had been previously unconscious; defects which he

Not now for the first time a mystic.

He did not renounce Eckart.

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* See the valuable historical sketch prefixed to Miss Winkworth's excellent translation of *Tauler's Sermons*. See also Böhringer's *Deutsche Mystiker*. Speaking of the sermon on which the layman commented so severely, he says, "A reader of the later Discourses of Tauler finds in *this* the self-same mystical principles as in them; it is difficult to fix in words what the diversity, the alteration, the progress is." He proceeds to point out with great clearness that it was not a change, a diversity, a progress in a system at all; but in the man himself. Tauler had begun to know the force of his own words.

Die Deutscher Mystiker, Johannes Tauler, p. 23, Zurich, 1855.

had discerned in his predecessor's statements, and which he may once have ambitiously striven to correct and improve by his own insight and eloquence, will have been less remembered; he will have understood better what was pure and noble in his life; prizing that more than the best dogmatic commonplaces or paradoxes, he will have used it to cover whatever in them appeared unsafe or untrue. All this is consistent with the assertion that the teaching of Eckart underwent not a revision but a transformation in the later mind of Tauler. The end proposed was the same. How to be a friend of God in the fullest sense of that word was the problem which each set before himself and before his hearers. Self-renunciation was accepted by the last not less than by the first as the one means to this end. In the negative proposition, that no outward acts of self-denial constitute *the* self-denial which is to issue in divine intuition, they would entirely have agreed. But after the discipline which Tauler had passed through, poverty of spirit became his watchword. The knowledge of God to which he aspired was a knowledge incompatible with any exaltation or worship of the intellect. The awful blank and atheism which he had found within him made the possibility of communion with the Divine Being seem altogether wonderful. If he felt in a very deep sense the truth of Eckart's idea, that it was implied in the constitution of man, yet he would rather represent it as a special, amazing gift of the Creator. Men must stoop, not rise, to receive it; they must not grasp at it as theirs in virtue of the direct alliance of the soul with God, but be content to accept it as bestowed upon them by God through the Mediator. These alterations, not in the letter so much as in the whole spirit and internal habit of Eckart's teaching, involved other and still deeper changes. No logic could force Tauler to speak of a Nothing as the Friend for whom man is seeking. The abyss of Being must be an abyss of Love. The old names of righteousness, and justice, and truth, must again denote the divine essence. The pantheistic substitutes for them must be regarded not as stronger but as feebler, not as the results of a more satisfactory analysis, but of an intellectual generalization to which the strictest experimental tests had been wanting. Thus, in the most inward sense of the word, Tauler became a Moralist. That he was a Moralist also in the outward sense of the word, that all notions of external acts being servile had vanished from his mind, if it is not more correct to say that he had discovered that filial service which is freedom, is abundantly evident from his unwearied labours among the sick and dying of Strasburg and the surrounding neighbourhood during the black sickness, and when the Pope had

But saw things from a different point of view.

Wherein they differed.

The idea of Nothingness—how changed.

Tauler a Moralist more than a Metaphysician.

punished the city by an interdict for its allegiance to the Bavarian emperor.

Hint against classification.

41. We have here then one of those warnings, of which philosophical history is full, against that rash habit of classification which brings the most really dissimilar men under one name or formula. The circumstances of Eckart and Tauler justify, if any circumstances can, the association of their names. They were Dominicans, Friends of God, never separated by external dissensions, bound together by the reverence and piety of the pupil for the master when death had put them asunder. If any two men had the characteristics to which the word "Mystic" is commonly applied as a term of reproach or of respect, these two possessed them. And yet, when fairly examined, they present the liveliest contrast to each other, not so much in the qualities of their intellect or character, as in their mode of conceiving and stating the questions with which they were occupied. Both strictly theologians, the purely metaphysical theologian never stood out in broader contrast to the moral theologian than in them. Setting before them the same object, commending the same general course of thought and discipline to their pupils, no men can have produced more opposite effects. No example of the danger of those divisions and generalizations in human history which have caused so much mischief in physical studies, will, of course, be a check to the vulgar partizan critic, but it may sometimes be remembered by the young and earnest student, who desires to investigate facts and to know men as they are.

Eckart and Tauler contrasts to each other in spite of their sympathy.

Question as to the ethical teaching of Tauler

42. When we speak of Tauler as a Moralist, and one of a very high and noble character, we may be asked if we discern no flaws in his morality; if we would place him on the same level with those English reformers who were protesting against the scandals of the priesthood in their day, and leading their countrymen back to the homely lessons in the Bible? We answer, that the opinions of an historian signify little to his readers, except so far as they may affect the fidelity of his narrative. Whether we prefer Wycliffe or Tauler is of no consequence, unless a bias in favour of the one evince a national partiality which may cause us to deal unfairly with Germans; or a bias in favour of the other, a love of mysticism which may make us treat all who are anti-mystical disingenuously. It is important at this particular point of our history that we should give such indications of our feelings on both these points as may put our readers upon their guard against us. For it cannot be denied that Eckart and Tauler, taken together, and viewed in their relation to each other, do represent certain qualities of the German mind—cer-

English and Germans in the past.

tain directions of German thought—which have been manifesting themselves in all the subsequent ages, and have never been more distinct and conspicuous than in the nineteenth century. Equally true is it that Occam and Wycliffe, viewed also in their relations to each other, exhibit very marked characteristics of the English mind, and are prophetical of some of its latest developments. Making an effort, then, to divest ourselves of patriotic prejudices, we distinctly admit that there were in Eckart indications of a metaphysical genius, however rashly applied, of which we can find no traces in our own teachers—not even in the learned and logical Occam. We must admit, further, that there were in Tauler moral corrections and protests against this metaphysical tendency, combined with a thorough appreciation of its nature and value, which we cannot look for in those who had never felt it in themselves—never understood either what were its blessings, or whither, if unbalanced, it might lead them. We may even go further in self-depreciation, and admit that if we give all weight to Chaucer's "Poor Parson of the Town," and receive it not as more applicable to Wycliffe than to a number of secular priests in his day and in after days, we should still be unable to establish our usual boast of practical superiority to the Germans, by comparing the visits to the sick which "Ne frost, ne rain, ne thunder," could interrupt, with the devotion of Tauler to the plague-stricken on the Rhine.

Eckart's superiority to Occam, to Wycliffe, in metaphysical intuition.

Tauler more competent to correct metaphysical errors than either of them.

43. But now we must take our revenge for these concessions. That *kind* of service which Occam rendered to philosophy, by distinguishing the nominal science from the real science—logic from theology—is one which we think a series of instances gives us a right to claim for this country. To speak more wisely, these instances point out the obligations that have been laid upon us, a part of the special work which we have to perform, and which we are not to expect that Germans will perform for us. We think also that the discovery of the special provinces of ecclesiastical and lay jurisdiction which Occam attempted, however little way he may have advanced towards it—however much may remain to be done before we can see the end which he sought—has been approached more nearly by the experimental studies of Englishmen, than by all the speculative powers of Germany. Turning from Occam to the priest of Lutterworth, we must once again maintain that the sympathy with human relationships, which was cultivated by the life of our English middle classes, and with which the secular priests of England were compelled to sympathize, gave him a moral superiority, not only over Eckart, but over Tauler, which affected, not so much the personal life of either, as their mode of contemplating the divinest subjects. And this difference,

Occam did for philosophy what no German has done, or can be expected to do.

Wycliffe's reverence for relationships has nothing answering to it in Tauler.

English and Germans in the present and future.

Duties of each.

Prospect and method of reconciliation.

we believe, will reappear in all the thinkers of the two nations whom we shall have hereafter to encounter. From Eckart to Hegel, we shall discover in the German mind a necessity for searching in some way or other after the *Absolute.* From Wycliffe to our own days, we shall find a sense of the sacredness of ordinary human *Relations* underlying our Theology, our Ethics, our Politics, and determining their shape. May not each nation come at last to understand its own calling, to recognize it *as* a calling, to confess the perils which accompany such a calling—not less great, perhaps, for the one than for the other. Then there may also arise a sympathy between them on the very ground of their difference, which can never exist whilst either ignominiously copies the processes of its neighbour—whilst either spends its time in denouncing the processes of its neighbour as dangerous or as feeble. Each may learn that a thorough metaphysical and moral science—a thoroughly practical life—demands the search for the Absolute—demands the reverence for relations—that each, therefore, may contribute aids to the unfolding of such a science—to the work of such a life. There must be much persistency in holding fast that which has been given—much tolerance of habits of thought and expression, which, when adopted by those to whom they are not native, are generally insincere, but which deserve all honour, and convey deep instruction, when they represent the character and mind of a people. So a true internal unity will take the place of local and sectarian hostilities; still more of all attempts to recover that uniformity which the Middle Ages strove in vain to preserve, of which the fourteenth century revealed the falsehood and the impossibility.

Summary of the fourteenth century history.

Schemes of unity do not belong to it.

44. For this is, as it seems to us, the real sign of that remarkable period, that one by which it is scarcely less severed from the century which followed it, than from those which preceded it. Turn which way you will, it exhibits a breaking up of all artificial schemes for binding the peoples of Christendom into one. Now and then we hear a faint cry for some centre to which they may refer themselves. There may be a dream in some that the Emperor will be a lay Pope, if the Pope cannot hold his own; or that some sphere may be found which each may rule without trenching on the rights of the other. But these desires have no strong hold upon the age; they do not spring out of its deepest heart. *These* are pointing to the deliverance of Christendom from an incubus. Its separate limbs are awakening with pain out of a catalepsy; as yet there is little eagerness to claim their privilege as portions of a body. All the most opposite influences are leading to the same result. An age of lawyers has begun: writs and

The lawyers; their strength and weakness.

decrees lift themselves up, as if they may defy and overthrow whatever speaks of a spiritual power and principle. But the lawyers are successful agents only while they are effecting the formal destruction of those bands, which are pretending to keep the nations together, and can keep them no longer. Let them try their arts in checking the impulses towards national emancipation, and they fail altogether. Scotland breaks through the meshes of the English Justinian; a patriot freebooter is stronger than the ablest of monarchs.

National enfranchisement.

The longing of Petrarch to bring back the Popes from Avignon is the longing of an Italian—not of a Churchman. He wants a representative of Roman dignity—the Tribune Rienzi for him, and for numbers, can perform that office better than the successor of St. Peter. Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, break the unity of the empire. The glorious oath at Rütli, and the arrow of Tell, set their country free from the House of Austria.

Chivalry—its apparent revival.

Chivalry appears to be rising again out of the disgrace which it had suffered from the money-getting Philip and the battle of the Spurs.

The Black Prince and Van Artevelde.

But the Black Prince can lead no holy war. He can only assert the distinction of England from France, at the cost of the distinction which his hatred of churls would have made him most eager to preserve, between Normans and Saxons. Froissart is the exalter of puissant knights; but he is compelled to make the most interesting passage of his history a record of the noble and ineffectual effort of a brewer to organize the turbulent guilds of Flanders.

The new societies.

The poets.

The convulsions to which we have alluded in Orders; the appearance of societies boasting that they have no external obligation; the poetry of Petrarch, occupied with an individual passion, not with any Christendom enterprise; the poetry of Chaucer, bringing to light so many distinct characters, honouring the national Saint, impatient of all ecclesiastics who are not national; represent the same feeling.

The philosophers and theologians.

The separating Nominalism of Occam—the search for a direct passage for the individual man to God by Eckart and Tauler—manifest it equally. Men might follow their own purposes; but there was one divine purpose in that age to which, willingly or reluctantly, they were all subordinate.

The new age.

45. The great Western Schism marks the commencement of a new epoch—an epoch which was not to modify merely, but to reverse these tendencies.

Desire for unity aroused by Papal schism.

This scandal was not felt as the continuation and necessary consequence of the previous one. It awakened a new set of thoughts and feelings in the mind of the European nations. It was no longer the question—"How can we maintain our independence of a power which has lost its old centre?" but "By what means can we be united again? Where can we find an authority to which

Search for centre.

we may submit? When shall Christendom have a centre?' A new passion was to be aroused; it was to try whether it could not stifle that which had gone before it—whether it might not slay its parent. The fifteenth century, the age of councils, was to identify Reformation with the restoration of Unity—was to seek for that good through great difficulties—willingly abandoning for it other blessings equally precious. The fifteenth century, the age of the revival of *Letters*, was to exalt itself against the fourteenth, which may not unfitly be called the age of the revival of *Life*. Our recent subject has led us to speak most of Englishmen and Germans. The transition from one of these periods to the other is best understood from the life and labours of a Frenchman.*

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* A complete edition of Eckhart's Discourses has been published in the course of the last year (1857). They form the second volume of Pfeiffer's *Deutsche Mystiker des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Huss and Gerson.

1. AT the Council of Constance we find two persons confronting each other, both of whom are worthy of all observation by the ecclesiastical historian, scarcely less worthy to be contemplated by the student of moral and metaphysical philosophy, if he wishes to understand the period through which we have just passed, and the period upon which we are entering. These two men are John Huss of Prague and Jean Charlier, chancellor of the University of Paris.

The Bohemian.

2. We name John Huss first, though many may suppose that, at least in literature and philosophy, he is far the inferior—because he is the best representative of the former age. In saying so, we do not at all deny that he was also the forerunner of a later age; that the sixteenth century might look back upon him with affection and reverence as the teacher and martyr for convictions which were to become parts of its life. Huss and his Bohemian disciples linked the age of Wycliffe to the age of Luther. But they were not in fellowship with the age into which they were born; they stood out in stern and direct hostility to much that was evil and to much that was good in that age, to those who were concerned in defending its abuses, to those who were striving for the correction of what seemed the most flagrant of those abuses.

Huss vehemently Anti-German.

3. John Huss had no connection, not even a remote affinity from race or internal feeling, with the German mystics. That they were Germans, would have made him suspect them, even if likeness of temperament and character had attracted him towards them. For Huss was a genuine Sclave, a cordial enemy of Teutons, one who did his utmost to repel German students from his own university. His zeal against them is an important feature in his character, one which has been often turned to his discredit. We are strongly persuaded that he was in the right—that for the sake of preserving a Bohemian nationality it was worth while to appear narrow and exclusive, and to risk the Christendom character which was associated with the name of University. Huss cared little for Catholicism in any sense of the word. It came before him in connection with

Anti-Catholic.

a very ill-mannered clergy, with very detestable Popes. He would keep his own dear Bohemia as free from contact with the outlying world as he could. If he could teach his people, and especially students, to love their native habits and their native tongue, if he could make the king care for the people and the people for their king, he believed he was doing the work that he was appointed to do. To this object he would sacrifice the unity which seemed to some of his enlightened contemporaries the only object for which they ought to live and die.

A Moralist and no Mystic.

A lover of the Old.

His Realism.

4. A clear practical morality was the main characteristic of Huss as a man and as a teacher. Even if mysticism had come before him in the most attractive form, there would have been nothing in his mind to welcome it. The moral scandals of the ecclesiastics inspired him with horror. He was sure that he had a call to protest against these; he was sure that they must proceed, not from Christ, but from Antichrist. The belief in Christ as a Deliverer from moral evil—the inadequacy of anything short of a belief in Him to break that chain—these became the subjects of his discourses and of his writings, these were the grand principles of his theology. He had no war with any ecclesiastical doctrines except so far as they interfered with this primary faith. He accepted the ordinary theory of transubstantiation as an explanation of the Eucharist. It was for the old faith and the old morals that he was fighting. Everything new excited his suspicion. He was therefore a Realist, not a Nominalist. The subtle distinctions of Occam were lost upon him. All those motives which, we said, were likely to separate Occam from the simpler reformers of his own country, would operate with tenfold force upon Huss. What did he care for arguments which proved that the German emperor had an equal jurisdiction with the Pope? What did he care whether John XXII. had committed himself to a single false opinion which might or might not be a heresy, when the popes of his own day were committing themselves to ten thousand heresies of life? With no very great dialectical faculty, these would be motives enough for disinclining him to view the new Nominalism with any great affection. And was not the other word a much better, healthier, more promising word? Was it not better to feel always that we were dealing with realities? Was not this needful above all in the highest region? Was it safe to think of Righteousness or Justice or Truth as if they were mere names? Were not the ecclesiastics of the day doing this very thing? No, Huss would teach the students of the University just as he taught the king and the court in the Bethlehem chapel, to be Realists in their hearts and understand-

ings, let Germans and Frenchmen talk about their names and their Nominalism as they chose.

His relation to Wycliffe.

5. We must never be weary of repeating the lesson, that like causes often determine good men to opinions that are most unlike. A desire to escape from the dominion of names when he was dealing with things, made Occam the schoolman into a Nominalist. A similar desire to escape from the dominion of names made Wycliffe and Huss, whose business was with the people, vehement Realists. This was one of the links between the man of Oxford and the man of Prague. The Queen of Bohemia was an Englishwoman. The adherents of Wycliffe appeared in her train and circulated his writings. These writings therefore came before Huss under respectable patronage. He found Wycliffe contending against the sins of layman and of priest as he was contending. He found Wycliffe denouncing the false miracles by which immoral doctrines and practices were made popular as he was denouncing them. He knew that the Englishman had been charged with heresy; but he had a confused impression that his philosophical writings at least had received the sanction of his university. In them he said there could be no mischief. Huss was too straightforward to make a distinction between two classes of books for the sake of evading any disgrace that might attach to one of them. The fact is, he did *not* go along with many of Wycliffe's doctrinal objections to the established opinions, and he *did* go all lengths with him in his desire to substitute the living realities of Scripture for the formulas of logicians. Identifying this purpose, which he saw clearly was *the* purpose of Wycliffe, with his philosophy (to us of no importance whatever), he naturally and honestly declared, that he sympathized with him as a philosopher even when he dissented from him as a divine. This question of Realism mingled with the question of heresy and of Bohemia in his disputes with the Germans at Prague. They were Nominalists, and with the help of their votes, forty-five propositions of Wycliffe were pronounced heretical by the university. When the Bohemians had an opportunity of voting alone, they passed the very modest and innocent resolution, that they rejected whatever in these propositions had an heretical sense.

Philosophical agreement.

Nominalism among the Doctors at Paris.

6. For our purpose it would be comparatively unnecessary to investigate the Realism of a man whose fame can never depend upon his achievements in philosophy, if it did not enable us to understand better the Nominalism of those who were opposed to him. Through the simplicity of Prague we may arrive at a clearer conception of the learning of Paris. Nominalism had now become the creed of the most accomplished Parisian doctors. The university which had crowned Duns Scotus at the

beginning of the century (associating his defence of the immaculate conception of the Virgin with his belief that universals were substantial), now listened to the lectures of Pierre d'Ailly, the able and orthodox opposer of his philosophical dogma. What did this change mean, and how had it been wrought? There was no sympathy between the French and William of Occam. He was English by birth; he was a defender of the Emperor. The Gallican churchman had his own hereditary quarrel with the Ultramontane bishop; had maintained with tolerable consistency, since the time of Hincmar, the independence of the national clergy. The saintly Louis had supported their pretensions; the unsaintly Philip in supporting, not theirs but his own, had brought the See of Rome to a humiliation and a dependence upon himself, which they could neither have dreamed of nor desired. But their quarrel was not Occam's quarrel; they did not appreciate or approve his arguments. So far, therefore, as his logic was connected with his political position, it came before them with no recommendations. Occam, however, had fully understood his own time. He saw that his master Duns had pushed Realism to its last possible point. He rejoiced in the discovery, because it enabled him to take up a theological position, which, if that Realism had been maintained, would have been untenable. Those who were not at all ambitious to follow him in the course which he marked out, perceived other dangers in adhering to Realism, of which he was not aware, or which were less likely to terrify him. The individualism of Duns was bearing strange fruits. One development of it might be seen in the German mystic, another in the English reformer. The empire of scholasticism was threatened by both. "Worn out old men," exclaims the Chancellor of Paris in answering a tract which had been written in defence of John of Ruysbroeck (a Flemish ally of the Tauler school), "yes, and old women, boys and girls, the very mob, may hear questions discussed in the vulgar idiom, which, we are told, that we theologians, because we are schoolmen, are not fit to handle." Contemptuous words no doubt had been spoken by the mystics of the schoolmen as of men ignorant of the deep things of God—they had been spoken in "the vulgar idiom." And those who spoke them were generally Realists by profession. Realism was coming to mean the attempt to throw off the yoke of words and propositions, and to present things invisible to the spirit as things visible are presented to the sense. What had the learned to do, then, but to become Nominalists in self-defence? If there was to be a philosophy at all, not for the vulgar but for the wise, must it not take this form? If theology was not to lose its connection with authority, to be at the mercy of every

Their ecclesiastical position.

Wholly different from Occam's.

Joannis Gersonii Op., vol. i., p. 79, ed. Du Pin.

unlearned man, must it not adopt this philosophy as its protectress or as its handmaid?

The University of Paris generally.

7. Such conclusions were natural in the professors of any great school. They were adopted, as we have seen, by the German schoolmen. But nowhere was there so great a temptation to adopt them as in the University of Paris. That had been the guardian of the Latin wisdom for centuries. It had been the centre of European study and speculation. Was this position to be lost? Was the "vulgar idiom" to gain a perpetual ascendancy? How might the peril be avoided? There were wise men at that time in the university who asked themselves this question and who found the answer. The Nominalism of Pierre d'Ailly and of his pupils was one means of upholding the authority of the venerable body to which they belonged. It was a concession to the progress of thought, a relinquishment of an old ecclesiastical prejudice, a clear evidence of moderation and enlightenment. It was also a great barrier against the advance of dangerous opinions. It gave the professed theologian an advantage over the popular teacher. If the theologian would condescend to be a popular teacher, that would be so much addition to his influence. But his former character must always predominate over the latter. He must never allow himself to be dragged along by those whom he was instructing; he must always remember that he is their master or doctor.

Its work in this century.

8. But Paris would never have been able to retain the power which it possessed in former centuries, still less to attain a much greater power than it had ever possessed, if it had merely accepted the Nominalist dogmas in exchange for the Realist. Its reputation in France, its reputation in Europe, could only be sustained, if it were able to devise some scheme for bringing the nations into one, for healing the deep wound which the schism had inflicted on the Papacy. If the theologians of Paris could devise some solution of the questions how a Pope could be set aside, how a Pope could be called into existence by those who owed him obedience, by those who believed they could not act without his sanction and blessing,—then theologians would prove indeed that they were professors of a mighty faculty, that they had a transcendent gift. And who could do it but they? It had been the belief of Christendom that the Papacy was above monarchs; how could monarchs provide for the removal of the calamities into which the Papacy had fallen? If the monarchs were to act, divines must tell them how they were to act. But surely not German divines, acting under imperial influence—surely not Italians, with their personal and local interests. Who could speak so freely, so gracefully, as Frenchmen, seeing they must be seeking a general advantage at the sacrifice of

Why it must solve the question of the Papacy.

some Gallican feelings; while, at the same time, they were less tied than others by the old theory which made any remedy for ecclesiastical evils without the aid of a Pope impossible? And if French divines were to speak, where had they a corporate voice except in the university?

The eminent men of the time.

9. So many circumstances co-operated to give this body a direction over the government as well as the thought of Europe, which no university has been able to exercise before or since. But all these circumstances would have been ineffectual if there had not been men who were qualified by the good and by their evil qualities, by their strength as well as their weakness, to take advantage of them, nay, to convert all influences which seemed adverse to their object in their own country and in Christendom, into instruments for promoting it. No amount of ability could have sufficed to give them the weight which they actually obtained, and which they exercised, not in their own name but as representatives of the University. Pierre d'Ailly, Nicole de Clamenge, above all, Jean Charlier de Gerson, were men who were penetrated by a great purpose, and could sacrifice their own private ends for the sake of it. Gerson had given the noblest proof of this capacity in a matter which affected France nationally, as well as the general interests of morality. The Duke of Burgundy was his patron; he owed him and felt towards him all gratitude. The Duke of Orleans was assassinated by his means. A defender of the crime appeared in the person of Jean Petit, who on scriptural and general grounds maintained that mischievous men might be destroyed by private violence. There was no doubt who had paid and prompted the author of the apology, or what would be the consequences of denouncing his principles. Gerson knew how the Duke dealt with his enemies, how he would deal with a friend who deserted him when help was most needful. In discourses to the people, in the University, and finally at the Council of Constance, he pursued the defender of crime with unrelenting hostility. And he reaped the reward which he had reason to expect.

Case of Jean Petit.

Gerson's education and objects.

10. No other evidence is needed to prove that this man was far above all ordinary selfishness. That he was above the higher and more refined forms of religious selfishness it would be rash to maintain. His education under very respectable and devout parents seems, if the reports which we receive of them are correct, scarcely favourable to such a result. They wished to teach him the efficacy of prayer in his earliest years. For this purpose, as often as he begged for nuts or cakes or sweetmeats, he was encouraged to make them the subject of a solemn petition on his knees; then they were thrown to him in great profusion out of a window. This Middle-Age anticipation of

Vita Gersonii, p. clxiv Opera, vol. i.

some of those arts—adapted to the philosophy of the eighteenth century—by which Madame de Genlis trained the son of Philippe Egalité to be the future ruler of France, often recurs to one painfully in reading certain passages of Gerson's life. Nevertheless it would be unjust to say that even heavenly cakes and sweetmeats upon which he himself was to feed were the main subjects of his petitions in his manhood. He was seeking steadily and consistently the unity of the Church. Whatever contributed to that end was dear to him. Logical subtleties, admitted ecclesiastical formulas, were to be cut through, that unity might be obtained. No doubt there was a contradiction—he did not dissemble it—in a Church assuming to appoint its head. But facts must be confessed. Two heads were rending the body. The monstrosity was in the state of things, not in the remedy which was provided for it. A Council must be summoned, with or without the consent of either Pope. It must assume a right to decide which is the Pope. If you drive us who say so to the last extremity, we must acknowledge a higher unity than that which we have in the Pope; we must look up to Him of whom the Pope is the vicar. So argued Gerson in his tract on the Unity of the Church; a tract in which, though there is little gracefulness, there is much direct, business-like reasoning, altogether different from the ponderous reasonings of Occam; exhibiting that power of lucid statement which does not desert a Frenchman even when he is not writing in the language that seems to be especially framed for it. Many results were to follow in after years from the course of thought into which Gerson was led in this pamphlet. The immediate effects of it and of other like labours were the Councils of Pisa and Constance.

Nothing to stand in the way of unity.

Tractatus de Unitate Ecclesiæ, 1407. Ger. Op., vol. ii., p. 113.

Gerson's concern in the death of Huss.

11. Huss the Bohemian was eager for the calling of the first of these councils; he hoped from it, as the Frenchman did, some reformation of the abuses of the Church, and the manners of the Clergy. At the second of them he was tried, condemned, betrayed, murdered. It would be mild language to say that John Gerson was consenting to his death. He had more weight in the decisions of the Council than any one there. The sentence may be attributed to him more than to any one else. He yielded to it in no moment of weakness or passion; he was probably never calmer in his life, never more persuaded that he was acting in accordance with his principles. He was following out *his* idea of reformation, *his* idea of unity. Yes, and however monstrous the assertion may sound, he was realizing *his* idea of toleration. Those who will take the pains to read his short discourse prepared expressly for the edification of the Council, "*On the Heresy of those who maintained that the Laity*

must Communicate in both kinds," will find that we are right, and will learn some curious facts about the condition of mind into which it is possible for a highly respectable and devout man to bring himself. Throughout he argues the case skilfully, and in a manner which must have been most satisfactory to those who were convinced already, but were rather in want of reasons to support their conclusion. He maintains that the Bohemians were intolerant men, who wished to represent the rest of the Church in a fatal error, who insisted upon that as necessary to salvation which all enlightened people saw had no such importance, but might be dispensed with for certain general conveniences and advantages. Nothing can be more moderate and gentle than the whole course of the reasoning. And then comes the question; how are these impracticable people to be dealt with? It may not be wholly useless, intimates Gerson, to reason with them, as I am doing now. And when we reason, it should be in the kindest manner, with the greatest desire to make all possible concessions as to what the Church should or should not insist upon. But as we cannot expect them to listen to our proofs, as they are a very deaf and hopeless generation, why, it is on the whole better to remit them to the secular arm. This, it must be remembered, was on a question which Gerson is himself anxious to represent as an almost indifferent one. What then must be done with a man who can be convicted upon tolerable evidence of uttering sentiments which may involve actual heresy? That such a man should be burnt and his ashes thrown into the Rhine—if he would not call himself a heretic when he did not believe himself to be one—was a perfectly natural deduction from the maxims which Gerson himself believed, which his hearers believed, to be singularly temperate and humane.

Ger. Op., vol. I., p. 57. (Notice especially the *Denarius regularum practicarum*, p. 463). The Tract was read at the Council, Aug. 20, 1417.

Debet potius hoc sacrum gen^{e}r^{a}le Concilium invocare auxilium brachii sec^{ul}a^{r}is quam per ratiocinationes contra tales, attentâ su^{a} determinatione quæ jam transiit in rem determinatam.

12. We have no wish to intrude upon the function of the ecclesiastical historian; but these remarks are necessary in order that we may appreciate the position of two men, both of whom were called reformers in their day, both of whom deserved the name; still more that we may understand the place which Gerson holds as a moralist and philosopher of the fifteenth century. One cannot read a single letter which Huss wrote in his prison, a single answer which he gave to those who would have tempted him to prevaricate, a word of the good confession which he bore before the Council, without feeling that the thing which he hated with all his soul was a lie; that that which he pursued with all his soul was truth. We do not think that it is possible to derive this impression from reading any, if it be the most devout, treatise of Gerson. He abhorred dissensions, outrageous and extravagant opinions—whatever had broken, or

Truth the end of Huss.

Not of Gerson.

was likely to break, the peace of society. He sought with all his heart and soul after Church Unity, loving that for its own sake; and as a means of promoting the spiritual well-being of the members of the Church, of leading them to a higher point of spiritual or moral perfection. But that lies might not be told and acted for the sake of putting down divisions, that unity can only be sought for in One who is absolutely true, that truth is the ultimate end, and that all the means of pursuing it are to be in accordance with the end; this was *not* Gerson's faith. Of morality in *this* sense he was not a professor.

The opposite types.

13. No types of character so sharply contrasted as these have yet come before us. And a race was to spring from the Bohemian as well as the Frenchman. Henceforth we shall have to note the divergency in every turn of our history, to see how the zeal for truth eclipsed in some minds the desire for unity, to see how truth in its highest and in its lowest forms was sacrificed by others to unity. In some we shall find the two desires blending confusedly and weakening each other; in a few a strong conviction that sooner or later they must coincide. Often we shall find two men fighting side by side, in one of whom the first passion is predominant, in the other the second, who must therefore, in spite of conventional agreement, constantly misunderstand each other, and are inwardly in fellowship with men in the opposite ranks, whom they seem to be attacking in deadly, even in single combat. Some advantage may accrue from studying a little longer the features of the Frenchman. Those of the Bohemian are simple enough, though we would not recommend young and earnest students therefore to turn away from them.

Gerson an eclectic.

14. Gerson aspired not only to be the reconciler of the Christian nations. In all his works on every subject reconciliation was his object. The Schoolmen and the Mystics were at war. He sought to bring them at one, defining exactly what each could do and could not do; how each was necessary to the other. Either of these classes was at war with those who were chiefly busy about practice, who sought chiefly to heal the flagrant disorders of the time. Gerson laboured that School doctrines might be directed to the assistance of the Confessor, mystical speculations to the elevation of the individual saint. Nominalists and Realists, or as he expressed it, Logic and Metaphysics, had been at war. Between them also he attempts to establish a union. Grand eclectical projects certainly,—to which the character and the circumstances of the writer were eminently favourable; and which have left no slight impression on the after history of Europe. Whether the projects were successful or not,—whatever the impression has been,—one remark must

be made which tends a little to humble the pride of eminent teachers. The age much more determined Gerson's mind than Gerson's mind determined the age. He fell upon a very corrupt period. That he reformed it cannot be affirmed. That it gave the tone to his thoughts, that it almost fixed his method of thinking, is quite evident. He wished to adhere to ancient maxims; he trembled when he forsook them. Yet unconsciously he abandoned the idea of theology and morality, which all the fathers, which most of the schoolmen had cherished. Theology, with him, has always a tendency to resolve itself into questions about the state and feelings of men—either sinners or saints; morality, into questions about the nature of evil.

Venial and mortal sin. Gerson, vol. i., p. 233. See *Regulæ Morales*, vol. iii., p. 77. (An undisputed work.)

15. If we assumed the authenticity of the work called the *Compendium of Theology*, which was long attributed to him, and which has many of his most marked characteristics, we could at once establish the first of these remarks. For in that work only a very small portion is given to the Articles of the Creed, a little more to the ten commandments; more than a-half to the discussion of the seven capital vices; the nature of delight, and how far it involves sin; the quality of the conscience. Willingly submitting to the decision of Du Pin that this book is spurious, we find the same result into whichever of his writings we plunge. Everywhere he is either the Casuist or the Mystic; he is using the old scholasticism to spin more fine and subtle webs for the conscience of the offender, or he is quitting scholasticism to ascend into the regions of ecstacy and rapture. The distinction of mortal and venial sins had been worked out by doctor after doctor; it had become involved in all the religious thought of Christendom. But it acquires a prominence and a formality in Gerson's writings which we think it can never have had before. He evidently thought that the more minutely he dealt with this subject—the more carefully he brought out all the shades of evil—the more he was doing to meet the disorders and corruptions of his time. Was he not meeting them by making their wickedness deeper, the deliverance from them more hopeless?

Liber de vitâ Spirituali animæ. Op., vol. iii., pp. 1-72.

16. The moderation; the amiable eclecticism of Gerson's statements was sure to make them effective as hints and manuals both for the confessor and the penitent. Thus, in his book concerning the Spiritual life of the soul, he begins in his second lecture with lamenting the burdens which are laid upon the conscience by the traditions of men. "Of the light yoke of Christ and. the law of liberty," he says, "there has been made an iron yoke and a heavy burden, pressing the necks of Christians, while some would have all their own laws, their own institutions, their own laws and statutes, to be taken as

Pp. 16 and 17.

German moderation.

precepts of the law of God, involving the ruin of eternal death if they are neglected. Who could enumerate all these traditions of men in the canons of pontiffs, in the synodal constitutions of provinces or dioceses, in the rules of orders, in the statutes of universities, colleges, and churches, in the edicts of emperors and princes, in the resolutions of communities? Many of those sentences are sanctioned by excommunication, many by a threat of probable divine indignation, some by the power of holy vows, nearly all by the obligation of oaths or acts of fealty." This passage, with some remarks which accompany it respecting a similar protest of Augustine, and the far greater necessity for it in that day, has naturally been a favourite one with the admirers of Gerson. It determines, they say, the purpose of this book, perhaps of all his writings. We make no doubt that Gerson was thoroughly honest in his lamentation, sincerely desirous to remove the occasion of it. But in the very process of marking out the distinction between that which the conscience was and was not to receive as vitally necessary, we think he imposed upon it new burdens, fretted it with more painful and worrying distinctions, made the actual fight with evil all but impossible.

Life and death.

Vita naturæ, vita gratiæ, vita actionis meritoriæ, vita confirmationis stabilitæ, et hoc dupliciter vel in viâ, vel in patriâ.

17. The tendency of Gerson to merge all morality in the one consideration of moral evil manifests itself strangely in this treatise. We are told in the opening of it that there are four kinds of *Life:* the life of nature, the life of grace, the life of meritorious action, the established or confirmed life in this probationary state, or in the state of fruition. These distinctions at least deserve to be fully worked out. But before we can learn more of them we are reminded that there are four kinds of *Death* answering to the four kinds of life. And to these the author devotes himself in most of the remaining propositions and corollaries of which the book consists. There, is, however, a singular digression in the course of it. Two lectures are devoted to an elaborate examination of the nature of law generally, and of its different departments. How, it may be asked, can such a subject find its way into a treatise on the spiritual life of the soul? Simply thus: The conscience is puzzled to ascertain what laws must be obeyed under penalty of falling into mortal sin, and incurring final damnation, what laws may be transgressed without more than a venial offence. In Gerson's mind the preservation of scientific order is nothing compared with the importance of removing this difficulty. An instance of Gerson's moderation and of its effects, occurs in the same work. It had been asserted by over stern divines that all without the grace of Christ are dead, and therefore can bring forth no living acts. Gerson finds it hard to evade an inference which seems to follow directly

Law, lectio secunda et tertia, pp. 17-37.

Grace of congruity, p. 8.

from his own previous statements. But we learn that the death of the soul is not so absolute, but that something like good fruits may grow out of it—such fruits as may deserve the subsequent infusion of a divine principle. Here is that doctrine of *grace of congruity* which is so important in the history of the reformation, put forth in the kindly eclectical temper which distinguishes all Gerson's teachings. Many would prefer a little Augustinian harshness, a little stern logic, to an accommodating dogma which leaves the foundations of morality uncertain, and which has made the practice of it dependent upon the caprice of casuists and confessors.

The mystical writings.

18. But books having a directly opposite purpose to these—intended to show how the soul may rise to heights that eye hath not seen—are those on which the fame of Gerson principally rests. These have caused many—not all of them French—divines, to suspect that he, and not its nominal German author, may have written the *Imitation of Christ.* That suspicion, so far as it depends on internal evidence, has originated, we think, in a very exaggerated notion of Gerson's indifference to scholasticism, of his reverence for the simple Christian. Such an indifference, amounting almost to dislike, is characteristic of the *Imitation:* its influence over so many generations of men and women in Romish and Protestant lands, brought up in reverence for Church ordinances and Church theology, brought up, like the Quakers, in contempt of them, has been owing to the assumption which goes through each page and line of it, that there is near every man a living and divine Teacher who would lead his spirit out of the dark and confused paths of sin and of intellectual speculation into a home of rest and peace. It is a mystical book in so far as it deals with the inner man, with the man himself, rather than with his accidents and circumstances. It is *not* a mystical book, if mystical imports the elevation of certain persons to a transcendent and rapturous state of which ordinary men are not capable. Indications of an opposite kind to this discover themselves in the professedly mystical books of Gerson. He affirms, as all great teachers had affirmed before him, that the affections of humble men may carry them into a region which the more learned men cannot reach. But it is his object, as his criticism on John of Ruysbroeck proves, to vindicate for the school theologian a high and distinct office. He may assist the soul in its flight, he may point out the course which it is to take even if he should be unable to ascend with it. So far is he from rejecting the aid of books that he continually disclaims originality, appeals to St. Thomas as an authority, idolizes Bonaventura, is ready to quote, sometimes rather unnecessarily, from the most unmystical authors, such as

The Imitation of Christ; its characteristic features.

How far those of Gerson.

Mystica Theologia Practica, 3 Consideratio, 3 Industria, vol. iii., p. 404.

Cicero and Terence. His book on speculative mystical theology contains a whole scheme of psychology. His book on the practically mystic theology shows how little he intended men in general to aspire to a sublime contemplative life. All who are engaged in mechanical employments, men busy in state employments—he is obliged with reluctance to confess also men engaged in most ecclesiastical employments—must be content with a level form of active life, must be satisfied with trying as well as they can to keep the commandments. Even in the spiritual dialogue which Gerson wrote in French for the benefit of his sisters, who in conformity with his exhortations, had faithfully eschewed matrimony—who seem to have been in every respect such persons as he would have educated to the highest wisdom—amidst many useful hints respecting the assaults to which they may be liable, and the armour which they are to put on, there is scarcely even a faint allusion to that continual helper and reprover of the heart and conscience, whose presence was everything to the author of the *Imitation*. It may be added, that the complaint which Dean Milman has made of that celebrated work—that it cultivates a mere solitary devotion, and therefore does not lead to a faithful following of His footsteps who went about doing good—is as inapplicable to Gerson as what we think is its nobler, more practical, more human merit. His life was a busy one. He who meddled with the schism, with the calling of councils, with the whole order of the Church, can never, in his most exalted moments, have forgotten that he was related to other creatures of his own kind, and was concerned in the general interests of the world.

Dialogue Spirituel de Jean Gerson avec ses Sœurs, vol. iii., p. 806.

19. To connect Gerson with à Kempis is in fact to deprive him of his own special interest, of his own very remarkable position. Without being an original thinker, he does more than almost any man to link the thoughts of different periods together. His book on the Triple Theology, the proper, the symbolical, and the mystical, condenses most of what had been said upon that subject, from the time of the pseudo-Dionysius downwards, and is a preparation for much that was to be said at a later part of this century by men whom he would have denounced as pagan, and who would have denounced him as barbarous. It is distinctly a treatise of philosophical theology, or rather of theological philosophy, assuming the Christian revelation as its foundation, but ascending from a consideration of the human soul, its capacities and its necessities, not descending from the manifestations of the Divine Being. Gerson is here on Eckart's ground. It would seem as if he were writing with a reference to some of Eckart's conclusions. His definition of the mystical theology, which he adopts from

De Triplici Theologia sive De Theologia Mystica Speculativa, vol. iii., p. 365.

the old hierarchist, involves, as he perceives, the peril of making the ultimate object of all thought a negation. As long as we are in the region of the *symbolical* we have corporeal similitudes of God; as long as we are in the region of *proper* theology we have the highest human affections used as analogies to discover those which correspond to them in God. But the *mystical* theologian ascends into a higher world. What! into a world where he finds merely the contradiction of all these similitudes, of all these analogies; a Being who is *not* this or that? Gerson allows that if we look at the subject in its merely intellectual aspect, the consequence is inevitable. But it is his very object to show us that the purely intellectual aspect is not the true one, not even the one which a full consideration of the capacities of the rational soul demands. For that soul has an intuitive faculty which is above the discursive faculty. Being a Nominalist, Gerson does not treat the powers of the soul as in themselves distinct entities. He is anxious to assert the unity of the soul, which the Realists, he thinks, are in danger of destroying by their zeal for the actual existence of its different parts. Subject to this remark, he distinguishes the rational soul, as far as its cognitive powers are concerned, 1st, into the simple or highest Intelligence; 2d, into Reason; 3d, into Sensuality, Animality, or more strictly the power of sensual cognition. Then to these correspond the faculties of affection. For the highest of these, that which runs parallel with the pure intellect, he uses the name *Synderesis*; for the second, the Will or Appetite, according to Reason; for the third, the Animal or Sensual appetite. The pure intellect is defined to be "a cognitive force of the mind, receiving immediately from God a certain natural light, in which and by which primary principles are acknowledged to be true and most certain so soon as the terms of them are apprehended." These primary principles are sometimes, he says, apprehensions of the superiority of one thing to another, sometimes common conceptions of the mind, sometimes rules concerning that which is immutable and cannot be otherwise. The *synderesis* is defined to be "an appetitive force of the mind receiving immediately from God a certain natural inclination to good, whereby it is drawn to follow the intimation of that good which is presented by the apprehension of the pure intelligence." Reason is "the cognitive power of the mind which deduces conclusions from premises, which eliminates things not perceived by sense from things perceived by sense, which abstracts qualities or things in themselves from their appearanecs or qualities; needing no organ (like the eye or the ear) for its operations." The rational appetite is an affection of the soul ready to be received immediately by the cognitive appre-

P. 370.

Pp. 370, 371, Consideratio, &c.

Consideratio, xi., p. 373.

Consideratio, xi.

Consideratio, xii. hension of the reason. The sensual cognitive power is "a power of the soul using in its own operation a corporeal organ as well exterior as interior (the light of the eye as well as the eye) for the perception of sensible things." The animal or sensual appetite is an "affection of the soul deriving its motive force merely from the sensitive apprehension." Consideratio, xvi.

The mystical theology.

20. It is therefore in the concurrence of the highest of these cognitive powers with the highest of those in the corresponding scale of affections, that the mystical Theology and the highest perfection of man consist. Thus we are saved from the possibility of contemplating a negation, as the ultimate object and result of human strivings. If the pure intellect taken alone seems to be satisfied with such a result, nay, to be incapable of any other, the affection which is its proper and natural companion, puts in its protest. Its exercises must be the exercises of Love towards an actual object. In such exercises, contemplative, meditative, ecstatic, the soul finds its full employment and satisfaction. These exercises of course belong only to a few rare and purified spirits. We see why those who are mainly busied with deductive processes, who are merely rational, cannot rise into the spiritual world. We see also why the affections left to themselves are as liable to degenerate as the cognitive powers. What we do *not* see, at least except in the way of inference and suggestion, is whether these affections and apprehensions proceed from a God who being perfect truth and perfect love is desirous that all the creatures whom He has formed in his image, should attain the perfection of which He has made them capable, or whether it is owing to some special felicity of nature, some arrangements of ecclesiastical machinery, or some divine partiality, that certain persons become so immeasurably elevated above the condition of their fellows. Neither Huss nor Gerson might answer this question satisfactorily to himself. Many more ages of thought and suffering might be needful to force it directly and palpably upon the conscience of Christendom; to get rid of the evasions and subtleties with which speculative and practical schoolmen, speculative and practical mystics, had alike disguised it. But certainly the man whose staff was the Bible, who tried to show common men busy in the common work of the world, that its highest truths were for them, who believed that those truths might be presented directly to the most sinful as the only instruments for their emancipation, was more likely to discover the clue to the labyrinth, was doing more to help future ages in finding it, than the most able discoursers on the synderesis and the three eyes of the soul.

Defect of the system.

Whether Huss could have filled up the blank.

21. A time came when Gerson's labours at the Council of Con-

stance ended, when the Council itself ended. His noblest act brought him his best reward. The condemnation of Jean Petit made it unsafe for him to return to Paris, then in the power of England and the Duke of Burgundy. In 1418 he fled in the disguise of a stranger from the city, in which for a time he had ruled like a king. He escaped first into Bavaria, then dwelt for a time under the protection of Austria, finally found a home in a convent of Celestines of which his brother was the prior, in Lyons. There he occupied himself, we are told, with the instruction of little children. There, perhaps, he attained more than ever before, the privilege of becoming a little child himself. If so, the desire for reconciliation which had been the desire of his life, may also have been fulfilled as it never had been while he was striving to put down the schism or was writing eclectical books. In his devotions he may have felt that the poor heretic whose ashes he had seen cast into the Rhine, was praying with him. And in his acts of penitence he will not have omitted that clause of the penitential psalm, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou that art the God of my health, and my tongue shall sing of Thy righteousness."

Gerson's end.

22. The Council of Constance had displayed Gerson in his strength and in his weakness. The Council of Basel was to bring forth another man of another race—like Gerson in many of his opinions upon ecclesiastical questions, like him in the object for which he was labouring—but with far greater originality of mind, far more closely connected with the later movements of the fifteenth century. Nicolaus von Cusa was born in the year 1401 in a village near Treves. His father was a fisherman. Nicolaus was bound to his craft; his father's hard treatment drove him from his home. He became a *famulus* in the house of a Graf von Monderscheid in the Eifel. The Graf perceived the boy's talents and sent him to be educated by a Brotherhood at Deventer. The Society in which Cusa was brought up was one of those which had excited the suspicion of the Mendicant Orders. Its external freedom approximated to that of the Societies which had been developed out of their own, and which aspired to such a dangerous independence. But the *Brothers of the Common Life* had no inward resemblance to the Brothers of the *Free Spirit.* Though tied by no very strict rules, though keeping up an intercourse with the outward world, they appeared to the most orthodox men of this time, to Gerson among others, safe and useful communities, capable of doing a work which the more formal orders could not do, avoiding some of the perils to which experience had shown that they were exposed. What they thought of themselves may be judged from this passage in one of Cusa's Exercitations:—"You say, perchance," said he, addressing

Nicolaus von Cusa.

Brothers of the Common Life.

Op., Nic. de Cusa, Basil. Ex Sermone *Accepistis in quo Statis*, Exercit. lib. 3. p. 412.

his brethren, "that we have not adopted that strictness of life which they have adopted who are dead to the world, those whom we call Monks. For we are able to possess property and to do other things which do not answer to the notion of death. I answer, that no one can deny that we are under canonical rules, that we ought to count ourselves members of an order, though we may differ from others who are bound by stricter rules. . . . . And although before we take sacred orders, it is lawful for us to betake ourselves to matrimony, nevertheless with orders comes the vow of chastity, according to the Fathers, and we pay a direct homage to our superiors." The existence and toleration of such bodies is one of the signs of the new time. How they reacted upon the time, the life of Cusa himself will best explain to us.

See Der Deutsche Cardinal Nicolaus von Cusa, von Dr. J. M. Düx. Regensburg, 1847. Zweites Buch. 1. Kap. S. 94.

At Basel.

De Concordantiâ Catholicâ. Op., p. 488.

23. Three tendencies very early displayed themselves in him: a discontent with the scholasticism of the time; a conviction that faith must be sustained by knowledge, but not merely or chiefly by that knowledge which was traditional; a desire to heal the disorders and divisions of the Church. He seems to have had more hope of finding what he was in search of in an Italian than in a German university, in legal than in strictly theological studies; he went to Padua, the great school for civilians and canonists. There he acquired what was more precious to him through all his life than all jurisprudence—a well-grounded acquaintance with mathematics. There, also, he became acquainted with some eminent and influential Churchmen; among others with a man who, by one act of perfidy, and by the signal punishment of it, has become more illustrious than by all his gifts, Cardinal Julian Cesarini. Cusa failed in the first process of law with which he was concerned. Another direction had been given to his mind; he entered into orders; he went to Basel, probably by the invitation of Julian, who was there as the ambassador of Eugenius IV. He deserved to be conspicuous at the Council, for he had drawn up an elaborate statement of the principles upon which he believed Catholic concord was possible. These principles were not essentially different from Gerson's as far as the assertion of the rights of councils were concerned. Had the question been the same as that at Constance, Cusa would probably have adhered stedfastly to the rebel doctors. But he had always proclaimed his belief in the necessity of a Pope to give effect to the decrees of a Council. The maxims which he had laid down in his book of concord had not been adhered to by those who directed the more violent proceedings at Basel; after a little hesitation he followed Eugenius IV. in his denunciation of the synod, and adhered to the Italian one, which he convoked by his own authority.

Prospect of a reconciliation between the Eastern and Western Churches.

24. That he was honest in this course there appears to be no doubt. The contrast between him and Æneas Sylvius, who was his fellow-apostate, is most marked. And Cusa had a temptation to join the new council, which was far stronger than any favour of the great or prospect of preferment would have been. It held out a hope of another kind of reconciliation than any which either Constance or Basel had promised. The terror of the Ottoman was leading the Greek to desire that the long feud with the Latin Church might be healed; the Pope was notoriously favourable to the application; now was the moment when it might be successful. Whether the Greeks were in earnest or not, whether the Pope was in earnest or not, Nicolaus could not tell; both had met with humiliations enough to cure them of levity. At all events *he* was in earnest. And to be united with Greeks was more to him than perhaps to any man in Europe. For he had grown weary of the Latin lore. The worship of Aristotle had become intolerable to his spirit. He had been in Greece, he had acquired a taste of Greek culture. He had begun to dream that Greece might yet be the appointed instrument of renovating Western philosophy and Western theology. Were not these motives enough for breaking loose from the endless divisions and contradictions of the Basel Council, and for throwing himself heart and soul into the interests of a prelate who, willingly or unwillingly, was committed to the greatest enterprise upon which any prelate had yet entered?

Cusa's calamities.

25. Here, too, disappointments were awaiting the seeker for unity. Ferrara could not give peace to the Church, or save Constantinople. Neither could it give peace to Cusa himself. His submission to the Pope, though we believe it was an honourable and in no sense a self-seeking submission, brought him honours and preferments; therefore humiliations and troubles. It is sad to compare the issue of his life with that of either of the men whom we have last contemplated. Huss's funeral fire is altogether satisfactory. It was the glorious and fitting close of such a pilgrimage. The sight of Gerson amidst the children of the Convent at Lyons is a relief and rest after his Parisian chancellorship and his triumphs at the council. He need not, perhaps, have written a Consolation of theology in imitation of Boethius; but one may hope that he found the consolation after he ceased to write about it. Cusa had a more cruel destiny. Nicholas V. was too wise a man to overlook one so honest and so able,—one who had brought MSS. from Constantinople and desired the building of St. Peter's. Cusa was made a bishop and a cardinal. He struggled for a reform of the clergy; he fell into strifes with German Princes; he was supported by

one who had other reasons than Nicholas for esteeming him—his old colleague Pius II. A miserable patron for so true a man! That Rome did not extinguish his faith or intellect is the best proof how vigorous they were.

Cusa's position at the moment of the revival of letters

26. Our readers know that the aspirations of Cusa after a union of Latin with Greek life, if not fulfilled in the way in which he had hoped, were to be fulfilled remarkably in this century. His own thoughts and writings present to us a phenomenon which those who talk about the revival of Greek letters either as a blessing or a curse, either as a new birth of the world or as the restoration of its ancient paganism, do not commonly take account of. They show us a man altogether free from the individualizing or national tendencies of the English or Bohemian reformers, no less free from the heathen classicality which is attributed to the new scholars, a Catholic in the strictest sense of the word, and not a Catholic who ultimately set the collective church above its visible ruler, a man so far from aiming at any refinements of style or eschewing the old Latin that he is positively *the* writer of the Middle Ages whom Cicero would have found it most difficult to construe, a man who is trying with immense effort to throw off the burden of the old scholasticism precisely because he feels it a weight upon his spirit, a hindrance to true humility and true knowledge of God as well as to all manly thought and freedom; one who is looking to Greek letters on the one side, to the science of numbers and forms on the other, as instruments of emancipation from the yoke of Aristotelian logic which is crushing the heart out of himself and out of his age. In every way such a writer is worthy of study. For after the glimpses we have had into the life and work of the old schoolmen, it would, we confess, be very painful to us if we thought we were to pass out of a world of rough, uncouth, Gothic vigour into a world in which nothing is to go on but the copying of models, though they may be the most exquisite and beautiful which the world has ever seen. Cusa is the witness that this is not the fate which was intended for Western Europe; but that the grand, Gothic, buoyant spirit which had been working in fetters through all the Latin age of Christendom was now crying to be delivered from these fetters, because they would not suffer it to till and subdue the earth, or to ascend up to Heaven and claim the image of God as was its right by His original charter and commandment.

De Docta Ignorantia Libri tres. Op., pp. 1-75.

27. The three books of Cusa upon "Learned Ignorance" are those by which we should hope to justify these remarks, if we could also hope that we might by any sort of description or by any quotations make our readers perceive what we suppose to be the purport and the sense of them. It would be great arrogance

to pretend that we are always sure of what the writer means; still more, that if we gave one of his sentences correctly, a clever critic might not be able to confound us by producing another apparently in the most direct opposition to it. In fact, if any young *littérateur* wishes to establish his fame by extracting passages which shall make a great and wise man look ridiculous; if any young, or old heresy-hunter wishes to find out passages which might convict a devout, godly, and orthodox man of pantheism or atheism; we cannot recommend either a more promising field for his labours than the *Docta Ignorantia* of the Cardinal Nicolaus von Cusa. The style of his books is, as we have hinted already, in the last degree uncouth and difficult; not in the least from a desire to hide his meaning; rather from an over anxiety to bring it out in its fullness, mixed with a kind of despair that words will ever suffice for that purpose. If he had not felt this despair, Cusa would never have discovered the immense value of that science which he had pursued at Padua. Lines, triangles, circles were to him the natural, in some sort the divine, substitutes for words. These appeared to him the proper organs for the metaphysician and the theologian. Their very inadequacy to convey the truths of which they gave the hint, led him to prize them as wonderful protections against the arrogancy and self-sufficiency of words, which are ever striving to bind down the infinite to our notions and conceptions. Cusa, already a Greek, would solicit Numbers to do for him what they had done for Pythagoras. He would lay again the foundation of philosophy in those words of Socrates which procured him the commendation of the Oracle, "That he knew only that he knew nothing." From this learned ignorance he believes there is an access to the deepest and divinest mysteries. The man who will make this his starting point may feel his way into truths in which he may rest, may find in those partial truths which the intellect looks upon as contradictory the path to the highest and most perfect unity.

Cusa's style.

I know that I know nothing the starting point of philosophy.

Search for the One.

28. Unity then is as much the object of Cusa's search in his philosophy as it was in his life; but such a unity as he could not have found at Basel, if all his scheme of a catholic agreement had been realized there at Ferrara, if Greeks and Latins had been brought under the yoke of Eugenius. THE ONE for which he is inquiring with the same ardour with which the philosophers of Greece inquired of old, is not a visible man whom he can look upon with his eyes, not a theory which he can comprehend with his intellect. It is not to be confounded with the number which represents it to the intellect. It is not the negation of plurality. It must be that in which all things find their meeting point. The greatest and the least must be included in it.

If you speak of it as the highest, you must speak of it also as the lowest. You seek it through all contradictions; it harmonizes all. Can we be speaking rightly when we say *It?* Must not we turn our thoughts to *Him?* Is not the One the living God?

Cusa's use of his mathematical learning.

See Book I., cc. (xi.-xxi.).

29. With profound awe, with an ever deepening sense of ignorance, and with a courage which is the result of that awe and of that humility, our author follows the question he has raised through all its windings. Much of the first book is occupied in tracing the process by which the mind is led from finite lines to the perception of the Infinite, from finite numbers to the perception of the One. There is the wonder of a child mixed with the ardour of a first love in Cusa's treatment of Mathematics. It is as if the sense of proportion, of order, of certainty which the pure science reveals, had crushed him almost as the beauty of form or colour in nature may crush an artist or a poet, and had drawn him on to the vision of that which transcends all order and proportion such as we can conceive of. Cusa may lose himself at times, as so many of his predecessors had lost themselves, in the attempt to discover the mysteries which are expressed in arithmetic or geometry. But he is not willingly detained by the suggestions of the fancy; he has a distinct purpose which makes him eager to cut his way through them. If we sometimes suspect him of a certain pleasure in paradoxes for their own sake, we must recollect that his great object is to make us feel the necessity of contradictions to our understanding and the duty of facing them, if we would have a vision of the all embracing Truth which lies beyond them. Our lazy desire to arrive at a conclusion in an instant cannot be treated tenderly by one who sets this purpose before him. And there is not the very slightest inclination in Cusa, to confuse us with these oppositions, that he may drive us, through scepticism, to seek a refuge in traditions or in human authority. No Protestant can be freer than he is—would to God that many were as free—from this wicked calculation. He does not aim at the ignoble end, therefore he does not resort to the dishonest and shameful means. He is flying from the worship of authority, not to it. Thus he speaks in an Apology for his book on *Learned Ignorance*, addressed by a disciple to a disciple:—"Tell me," asks a pupil, "wherein the knowledge of Socrates differed from that of others?" "Just," he answered, "as the knowledge of a seeing man differs from the knowledge of a blind man about the brightness of the sun. The blind man who has heard much about the brightness of the sun, and that it is so great as to be incomprehensible, believes that from what he has heard he knows something about the sun's brightness, whereof nevertheless he is altogether igno-

Not one who plays with the analogies of Number and Form.

Not a seeker of implicit faith through Scepticism.

Apologia. Opera, Basil, p. 63.

rant. But the seeing man, if he is asked about the brightness of the sun, how great it is, answers that he is ignorant. And so, in respect of that, he has the *Science of Ignorance.* For light being apprehended only by sight he experiences the brightness of the sun as transcending his sight; whereas the other has neither the science of ignorance nor any experience. The greater part of those who boast they have the science of theology, resemble these blind people. For almost all who betake themselves to the study of theology, busy themselves about certain positive traditions and the forms in which they are delivered, and then they fancy that they are theologians when they learn to speak as others speak whom they have constituted their authorities. They rise not to the knowledge of that inaccessible light wherein is no darkness at all. Whereas those who, beginning as Socrates began, pass from mental hearing to mental vision, have the delight of attaining by a sure road of experiment to the true *Science* of Ignorance."

Steps to Science.

False inference from such statements.

See Book I., chapters vii., viii., ix., and x.

c. xxiii.

Book I., c. xxvi

All knowledge, as well as Divine knowledge, destroyed by assumption or self-conceit.

30. Such a passage as this might lead some to imagine that Nicolaus had the design of overthrowing the doctrines which were received in his day, and of substituting for them some apprehensions of his own. This opinion is confuted by every page of his book. He finds in the Trinity—involving the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son—that eternal, incomprehensible Unity of which he is in search. This it is which lies behind finite numbers and forms and proportions. This is that truth which he thinks all nations and all philosophers have been seeking, if haply they might feel after it and find it. He demands an *affirmative* theology, in which God will appear as uniting in Himself that which is scattered in all creatures. He demands a *negative* theology, which shall distinguish between Him and His creatures, and denounce all experiments for constructing His thoughts and actions out of theirs. But to make theology in either sense merely a repetition of phrases and opinions handed down by fathers and doctors, is in his judgment to make it unreal, to take all substance out of it, to erect human notions and opinions into the measure of that archetypal standard by which they must at last be judged. And though he feels that the highest science is most injured by substituting the formal notions and opinions which may be inherited and committed to memory, for the actual and direct vision which the humblest who is content to learn through ignorance may enjoy, yet he feels that all other studies have suffered from the same cause; that the true apprehension of what each creature is, and of what the universe is, is as much lost through the self-conceit which assumes knowledge, and therefore only rehearses opinions, as the apprehension of Him who formed each

creature and the universe. The second book of *The Learned Ignorance,* which treats of the being and knowledge of the creature as dependent on the Being and Knowledge of the Creator, contains some splendid passages, for which the modern physical student, if he would ever acknowledge his obligations to moral students, might be very thankful; such reverence does he show for every created thing as presenting some likeness or image of the Creator; such a Baconian modesty and fearlessness does he demand of him who investigates its nature. One passage we must quote to show what a capacity for high philosophical eloquence there was in Cusa, if he could only have thrown off his stammering dialect, which often makes him almost inarticulate. Book II., c. ii., p. 25. "Whence we infer that every creature as such is perfect, even if in respect of another it may seem less perfect. For the most gracious God communicates being to all in that wise and under those conditions in which it can be perceived and enjoyed. Seeing, therefore, that God, without partiality and without grudging, communicates this being to all, and that it will not be received under those conditions which belong to another, or in any other manner than that in which it is received, every created being rests in its own perfection which it hath in such rich liberality from God; desiring to be no other thing, as if that were more perfect, but preferring to be that very thing which the Highest of all hath made it, craving that this may be preserved incorruptible, and may attain its full development."

Third Book of the *Docta Ignorantia.*

31. The third book of this remarkable treatise is for the Christian theologian the most interesting part of all, as it is intended to show how the absolute Being of God is presented to man in the Person of Christ, as it examines each article of the Creed, ending with a very magnificent passage on the Church. Our business does not allow us to dwell much on this part of the work. One passage near the end of it we may endeavour to translate, because none seems to us more fully to express the highest mind and purpose of the author: C. xii., p. 61. "The desire of our intellect is to live intellectually, that is, continually more and more to enter into life and joy. And seeing this Life is infinite, the blessed are continually borne towards it with fresh longing. They are satisfied, therefore, as thirsty spirits drinking from a fountain of life. And because that drinking goeth not into the past, but is in eternity, they are always blessed in drinking, and are always satisfied, and never have finished their drinking or finished their satisfaction. Blessed be God who hath given us an intellect which is not to be satisfied in time; whose longing, seeing that it is capable of no end, apprehends Himself as above all time, and knows that it cannot be satisfied even with the

intellectual life it pants for, except in the fruition of the perfect Good which never faileth, where fruition does not cease, because the appetite does not decrease in the fruition. . . . . This, then, is the capacity of the intellectual nature, that by receiving into itself life it is converted into that very life, as the air, by receiving into itself the rays of the sun, is converted into light. And the intellect, when in the exercise of its proper nature it turns to its object, understands only the universal, and the incorruptible, and the permanent; for the incorruptible Truth is its object; towards which it is carried; which Truth it apprehends in eternity; quietly resting in Christ Jesus. This is that Church of the triumphant in which our God is blessed for ever, where Christ, the true Man, is united in such perfect and supreme union to the Son of God that Humanity itself subsists in the very Divinity; the truth of Humanity still remaining in the deep and ineffable union." The sentence which follows this might be somewhat perplexing to the reader, and ought not to be inserted merely as an extract; but it contains a strong assertion of the permanence of each distinct living person, as well as of the whole Humanity. No one could be more easily accused of believing in a Buddhist absorption than Cusa; no one is really kept more free from it by his faith in the Mediator.

What man is created to be and to desire.

32. Truth, then, it will be perceived, as involving Unity, not Unity without Truth or as a substitute for Truth, was the object of this brave and noble cardinal. Here is his great distinction from Gerson. We do not say that he could understand much better than Gerson those who were resolutely pursuing Truth, simply for the deliverance of their own consciences, without respect to the conditions of human society, and without the capacity of entering into any metaphysical refinements. We rejoice to think that he had not the temptations of the Frenchman in regard to Huss. We cannot believe that he would have sanctioned, by any vile sophistry, the violation of a safe-conduct, for truth in words and acts appears to have been most precious to him; but we dare not deny that he might have voted with the majority at Constance, when the question was whether a disturber of unity should be summarily disposed of. In his letters to the Bohemians he argues, as one might expect him to argue, that the Eucharist is the great pledge of fellowship among all the members of Christ's body; that to make it a plea for separation is to violate its' character; that the Bohemians were setting up an opinion of their own, which was an intolerant opinion. The secular arm is not directly invoked, as it was by Gerson. But there is no such distinct recognition as we might wish to find of the sacredness of the conscience in each man. Cusa has not learnt (who had or who

Truth and Unity.

Opera, pp. 829-861.

has?) how that is to be harmonized with the principle that all are one. At the same time it should be remembered that Cusa did as much to shake the false unity of the Church, even while he bowed to the Romish Bishop, as Huss himself. No one more earnestly taught the possibility of ascending above all conclusions of doctors, above all decrees of Popes, into the region of perfect light and peace. No one declared more consistently that such an ascent is intended for man as man —that he has been created for it and redeemed for it. No one made his faith in Christ less a ground of exclusion, more the basis of a human and universal fellowship. In one remarkable dialogue on "*The Peace or Agreement of Faith,*" a devout worshipper, whose heart has been smitten by the news of the fall of Constantinople and the victories of the Turks, is represented as stirred, not by the old crusading impulses, but to mournful reflections on the diversities of religions throughout the world, and to earnest prayer that all might be one. As he prays a heavenly vision is vouchsafed to him. He sees the angelic hosts engaged in the same supplication. And then the Eternal Word who has been made flesh comes forth and speaks to Greeks, Italians, Arabians, Indians, Chaldeans, Jews, Scythians, Persians, Tartars, Armenians, of that which separates them all, and that which might unite them all. Each is met upon his own ground. There is an attempt at least to do justice to the cravings and the difficulties of each. The vision may be incomplete; the speech of the Divine Teacher may have been imperfectly heard or inaccurately repeated; but few such dreams have come to our knowledge in earlier or in later times. No one would have said more eagerly than Cusa that he was ignorant how it was to be realized, but that some time or other it would be realized in a way beyond all he could ask or think.

De Pace Fidei, Opera, p. 862.

33. At the age of sixty-one Cusa wrote a book on *The Hunt after Wisdom.* He does not know, he says, that he shall have much time left for recording what he thinks worthy to be recorded concerning the different tracks and scents which he has had of wisdom, and how, up to his old age, he has followed after her. The keen and hearty old sportsman is not, however, content with fighting over again the fields which he has himself won: he has the kindliest sympathy with all who have been engaged in the chase before him; he has an interest in all their feats and failures. He has read Diogenes Laertius, and the stories of the philosophers which that respectable and useful gossip tells have come to life in his mind. He has been with Thales, poring over the mystery of water. He has mused with the dark Heraclitus; Pythagoras and Plato have, of course, profoundly awakened his spirit. Aristotle, as a seeker for wisdom, no

De Venatione Sapientiæ, Opera, p. 298.

longer as a dictator, can be cordially admired; his logic may be looked upon as a weapon of the chase, not as something to hold truth shut up in a menagerie, or stuffed for a museum. Nothing in this record of earnest human inquiries appears to the old cardinal inconsistent with his love for the divine oracles. Nor does he, like some modern divines and statesmen, vindicate his respect for heathen lore, by declaring that the subjects of which it treats are altogether different from those of which the Scriptures treat—that one is occupied with real things and real men, and the other with a set of imaginary things and imaginary men to be believed because we are told to believe them and because it is perilous not to believe them. If Cusa had had this opinion, he must have rejected either the philosophers or the Bible, or both; but he must have rejected also the deepest thoughts, hopes, convictions of his own spirit. For the Bible and the philosophers both spoke to *him* of the things which he wanted to know. The Bible stirred him up to those inquiries in which the philosophers were engaged. It assured him that their searchings and his own were not in vain; that those who seek will find; that to those who knock the Truth will open itself. He could not doubt that that Eternal Word, who he believed would at last guide all the nations of the earth to peace and unity, had taught the representatives of the different nations to seek after Him, and had prepared the one nation to be the messenger of Him to the world.

Est enim logica (ut Aristoteles dicebat, exactissimum instrumentum ad venationem tam veri quàm verisimilis.

Philosophy and the Bible.

34. With Nicolaus of Cusa the curtain drops on the age of Councils. When it rises again we are in the midst of the gardens of Lorenzo at Florence. Schoolmen are disappearing; scholars are taking their place. Greek lore is forcing the Latin to do it homage. What the transition was from one time to the other; how deeply philosophy was interested in it; we shall hear in the next chapter.

The Councils and the gardens.

CHAPTER III.

SECOND PART OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Marsilii Ficini Florentini in Plotinum, ad magnanimum Laurentium Medicem Patriæ Servatorem, Proœmium. Basilii, 1525.

Cosmo forming an Academy.

The physician's son.

Picus of Mirandula.

1. "The great Cosmo, the father of his country, at that council which was held for the reconciliation of Greeks and Latins at Florence, under Pope Eugenius, ofttimes listened to a Greek philosopher named Gemistus, surnamed Pletho, disputing like another Plato concerning Platonic mysteries. By whose fervent eloquence he was so excited—so inspired—that the thought of a great Academy was conceived in his great soul—a conception which in due time was to come to birth. When that birth had happily taken place, the great Medicean destined me, the son of his favourite physician, Ficinus, while yet a boy, to take part in this great work—nay, educated me for it day by day, and to that end took care that I should have not only all the books of Plato but also those of Plotinus in Greek. Afterwards, in the year 1463, when I was thirty years of age, he gave me first Mercurius Trismegistus, afterwards Plato, to translate. Mercurius I completed in a few months, while he was living. Then I attempted Plato. Although he was also longing for Plotinus he said not a word to me about translating him, lest he should seem to crush me at once with a too heavy burden. Such tenderness was there in this great man towards his friends—such moderation towards all! Nor did I think myself for some time a sufficiently initiated man to attempt Plotinus. But meantime Cosmo expressed, or rather impressed from on high, that which, when alive upon earth, he had kept concealed. For when I had published my Latin version of Plato, the heroic mind of Cosmo instigated, I know not how, the heroic mind of Picus of Mirandula, that he should come to Florence—he himself not knowing how or for what end he came. He presented himself at Florence in the very year, on the day, almost in the hour, in which I had published Plato, and instantly after the first salutation, asked me about Plato. He has just gone, I said, from this threshold. Thereupon he burst out into vehement congratulations, and in what words I know not, and he knows not—I will not say induced—he *inflamed* me to undertake Plotinus. It must have been divinely ordained that, just when Plato was to have a second birth among

Providence.

Growth and education of philosophy.

us, this hero Picus was also born, the planet Saturn then holding his house in Aquarius, under which star I also had been born thirty years before. It was surely, too, by no accident that Picus coming to Florence the very day on which my Plato came forth inspired me with that old desire of Cosmo about Plotinus —a desire hidden from me, but breathed from heaven into him. But now seeing that I have touched upon the Divine Providence in this work of philosophy, I will enlarge upon it a little more. It must not be supposed that the acute and philosophical minds of men can be allured and drawn on to a perfect religion, except by the food of philosophy. For acute minds oftentimes commit themselves to reason alone; and when they find this in some religious philosopher they readily admit a sort of general religion; acquiring which, they are framed more easily to a more perfect species, comprehended under that vaguer genus. Therefore it was not without the providence of God seeking to draw all to Himself, according to the character of each, that a devout philosophy was born among the Persians, under Zoroaster, and among the Egyptians, under Mercurius—a philosophy harmonious in spite of the difference of the places. It was sent to nurse among the Thracians, under Orpheus and Aglaophemus. It waxed into strong growth under Pythagoras, among the Greeks and Italians; at length it attained its full manhood under the divine Plato, at Athens. But it was the ancient custom of the theologians to conceal divine mysteries under mathematical numbers and figures as well as under poetical figments, lest they should become dangerously common to every one. Plotinus at length stripped theology of these veils, and first and alone, as Porphyry and Proclus testify, penetrated with divine insight the secrets of the ancients. But on account of the incredible brevity of his words, the copiousness of his thoughts, the profundity of his sense, he demands not only a translation but commentaries. My object in translating and explaining Plato and Plotinus, and in connecting them with the older theologians, is, that the fables of the poets may not be profanely mixed with the acts and mysteries of piety, and that the Peripatetics—under which name I include nearly all our existing philosophers—may be admonished that they are not to think about our common religion as they think about the stories of old women. For almost the whole world is now occupied by Peripatetics; they being divided into the two principal sects, that of Alexander (Aphrodisius), and that of Averroes.* The one regards our intellect as mortal; the other contends that it is simply individual. Both equally destroy the foundations of religion; the more as they seem to deny a Divine Providence in the affairs of men. Each appears to have revolted even from their own Aristotle. For the mind of Aristotle seems to be understood by few in this day, except by my lofty fellow-Platonist, Picus, who approaches him with the same reverence with which Theophrastus, Themistius, Porphyry, Simplicius, Avicenna, and in our own time Pletho, regard him. But if any one fancies that an impiety so widely spread, and defended by such sharp wits, can be extinguished among men by a naked preaching of faith, the event will show how far he is from the truth. A greater power is needful. And this power must be exercised either by Divine miracles, or else by a certain philosophical religion, to which philosophers will at least willingly listen and which may in time convert them. But it pleases Divine Providence in these ages to confirm religion itself by the authority and arguments of philosophy, just as in former ages it was confirmed among all nations by manifest wonders. By Divine Providence, then, have I been led to interpret the divine Plato and the great Plotinus."

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* The Aphrodisians and Averroists both were inclined to resolve all philosophy into psychology. So doing they were good Aristotelians. But the question whether the ψυχὴ is a common life in things, or whether it is essentially individual, divided them. The first, Ficinus intimates, regarding it as a *diffusive* life, denied personal immortality. The latter, asserting personal immortality, made

Need of a new philosophy.

So wrote Marsilius Ficinus to Lorenzo the Magnificent, "the saviour of his country." The letter concludes with a hope that the brief and true account of the life, acts, and manners of Plotinus, by his faithful disciple Porphyry, may prove acceptable to Lorenzo, "seeing that Angelus Politianus judges it to be oratorical as well as philosophical."

Value of this dedication.

2. The reader will find in this passage a compressed history of the philosophical movement in the latter part of the fifteenth century. A commentary upon this dedication of Ficinus would bring out very distinctly the relations between that movement and the theology and literature of the new age; how much both owed to their Medicean patrons, what kind of evil as well as of good they, with Florence and with Italy, would receive from those patrons. For our purpose the extract is of special importance, because it at once decides the question which has been so often raised, so often, especially in England, decided unfairly; to what cause we owe the Academy of Florence and the great results which followed from the establishment of it. A vague impression prevails in the minds probably of a majority

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each creature a solitary being. The denial of Divine Providence by the two sects is supposed to be involved in their doctrine about the soul, or to be developed out of it, inasmuch as the soul, whether considered as a general life or as a distinct entity, stands equally aloof from its Creator. It is a property of the universe, or of the individual man, not in any sense capable of an influence from God or of converse with him.

of students, that the Platonic studies which they are aware proceeded under the protection of the Merchant-rulers, were only the consequence of a general literary impulse, of a craving for all kinds of Greek lore—the meaning of which was more fully expressed in the reverence for Greek statues, in the cultivation of a classical style of writing, than in those deeper studies to which Ficinus and Picus devoted themselves. If we overlook chronology, and confound the later days of Lorenzo with the age of Cosmo, there will be much evidence in favour of this opinion. Ficinus, we see, hopes with some timidity that the life of Plotinus which he is bringing before the Latin world may not be disagreeable to his master, seeing it has received the imprimatur of that *arbiter elegantiarum*, Angelus Politianus. By that time no doubt the mere men of grace and letters had established their ascendency; the students had to beg for their pass-word, to be grateful for their condescending, often somewhat contemptuous, smiles. But Ficinus writing to Lorenzo can appeal to his recollection that this was not so at first. However strange and incredible the statement may sound to us, we have the clear testimony of those who knew best and could not be misled by their prejudices that it was Cosmo's passionate admiration of the Platonic discourse of Pletho, when they met at the Council, which led him to make his gardens the home and centre of Italian thought and cultivation.

Was Philosophy or Literature the cause of the Academy at Florence.

The times of Cosmo and of Lorenzo not to be confounded.

3. To understand the full force of this fact, we ought to know who Pletho was, what he had been doing in his own country, what was his business at Florence. He was an old man when Cosmo fell in with him; he was probably above twenty years of age before the end of the fourteenth century. He may have been just arrived at man's estate when the sword of the Ottoman, suspended over Constantinople, was suddenly drawn back from the appearance and victory of Timour. He lived on to know that the hour of his country's fall was fixed, though it had been delayed. He lived to hear the cry of his Emperor for peace with the Latins as the one hope for the preservation of the old capital of Christendom. He lived till Mahomet II. had changed St. Sophia into a Mosque. All these things seem to have troubled Pletho very little. Not that he was a fierce ecclesiastic, who would not abate one jot or tittle of Greek orthodoxy to secure the papal co-operation for the saving of his city. There were such at the Councils of Ferrara and Florence. There were also laymen who proposed healing measures while they were away from their country, but relapsed into vehement exclusionists and denouncers of their brave monarch when they returned to Constantinople, and obtained offices in the Church. One of

Pletho.

See 'Pletho und Gennadius, Aristotelismus und Platonismus in derer griechisch. Kirche,' Von Dr. W. Gass. Breslau, 1844.

Gennadius

these, George Scholarius, otherwise Gennadius, became the Patriarch of the city, and retained that position under the patronage of the Turkish conqueror, who certainly owed something to his obstinacy. But Pletho had no sympathy with Gennadius. They were deadly opponents all their lives through; not about the *filioque* or the relative authority of popes and patriarchs, but about the claims of Aristotle or Plato to be the leading doctor of the world. To this controversy, which absorbed the whole soul of Pletho, trifles about the ascendency of Greeks, Latins, Ottomans, were wholly subordinate.

Gass 1st Abt. § 26.

When consulted by the Emperor what would be the result of a union with the West, he answered surlily, "Little or none;" feeling probably much as many a modern German philosopher would feel if he was asked about a reconciliation between the Church of England and that of his own country; that the thing itself signified nothing and might be left for divines to settle as they would; but that an alliance might introduce some greater restraints of public opinion, if not of ecclesiastical discipline, upon the freedom of speculation.

Defence of Plato's orthodoxy.

4. It must not be supposed, however, from what we have said, that Pletho was not in his own way thoroughly in earnest, or that he did not connect the doctrines of the Church with his defence of Plato. If neither he nor Gennadius can be called very zealous patriots, both were zealous to the utmost as philosophical partizans; and each asserted that the old philosopher whom he defended was a better Churchman than the one whom he attacked.

The controversy in former days.

Gennadius followed a considerable line of ecclesiastical predecessors, ascending to the age of Proclus, in raising suspicions against the old sage who had been idolized by an anti-christian school, and in exalting Aristotle precisely for those doctrines in which he had dissented from his master.

Gass. 1st Abt. § 14.

But Philoponus, who had taken up this argument chiefly for the purpose of confuting Proclus, was accused of misrepresenting Aristotle by Aristotelians, and of explaining away the deepest mysteries of the Gospel by orthodox Christians. Those who adopted his course of reasoning might be good special pleaders; but like many theological special pleaders, they were thought to have sacrificed the very cause for which they were contending in their eagerness to overthrow its opponents. There had always been therefore in the Greek Church some who believed that it had gained little from the patronage of Aristotle, or from its patronage of him. There were some who remembered that all the great Greek Fathers and *the* greatest of the Latins were Platonists. And there was always a class of philosophers, loosely related to the Church, who partly helped to keep

The 15th century.

alive these impressions, partly to frighten divines from entertaining them. Now, in the fifteenth century, a new impulse was given to this strife; for now men were to be interested in it who were not mere clever debaters, in whom there was life and manhood and hope. Pletho had fought valiantly as Greeks fight, on his own soil; but it must have been with him as with those Greeks who came to Rome in the days of Cato the Censor. He must have caught a new inspiration when he saw the faces of the young Italians and Germans who were drinking in his words.

5. In his controversy with Gennadius (from which the West can scarcely have learnt good manners, whatever other parts of civilization it might owe to Greek instructors*) he answers a contemptuous sneer against his new disciples with some spirit. "As for those fellows," said the Aristotelian patriarch, "who have become victims of Platonism in Italy, we know what they are. Many of us have seen men conversing with Pletho, who know about as much of philosophy as he knows of dancing." "It is quite proper," is the reply, "that these Italians should be objects of your envious slander, seeing that they are far your superiors in all wisdom, and have far livelier intellects; for you are utterly dull and witless even about Aristotle, of whom you boast yourself the champion." Gennadius afterwards proceeds to speak of the "majority" in the West who are partizans of Aristotle, men "of whom he himself has met with not a few." Pletho at once demurs to the scheme of ascertaining the sentiments of the Latins by counting heads. The Latin Aristotelians, he says, have no real knowledge of Aristotle, and know absolutely nothing of Plato, except what they have learnt from the statements of his envious pupil; whereas he can mention men of great faculty, and students of both tongues, who are thoroughly ashamed of the philosophy which has prevailed in those parts of the world and eagerly catch at the healthier lessons he is able to impart.

Κρείττους δὲ ἀριθμοῦ σχεδόν εἰσιν οἵ γε τοιοῦτοι.

Pletho's hearers.

6. Those to whom Pletho alludes in this passage were regular scholars. Gennadius may have had his eye on such men as Cosmo, whom he no doubt regarded as much better able to judge of dancing than of philosophy. But Pletho was right. The scorn was utterly misapplied and vulgar. If he could make men of business, men of the world, with honest open hearts, stare while he spoke to them of a divine beauty and justice and truth, which they were intended to behold and converse with, he might leave Gennadius with his "majority" of doctors, who adhered

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* Pletho calls his opponent a liar in the first sentence of his reply, and intimates that the habit of lying was strictly in accordance with the rest of his character. See Γεωργίου τοῦ Ρεμιστου πρὸς τοὺς ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους, Γεωργίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ἀντιλήψεις—*Gass. Abt.* 2, *p.* 54.

to the old traditions of the Latin schools. The latter may keep their opinions against invaders. But the former will spread their faith. Thoughts that had been sleeping in Cosmo were awakened by Pletho. The new lessons had a strange likeness to old lessons he has heard in his nursery, which in his manhood had been associated with a priestly lore that sounded to the princely merchant base and insincere,—with figments that he had learnt to despise. The Greek culture seemed to have a closer relation with common life than the school theology. Yet it spoke more to the refined man, such as he is or aspired to be. If this lore can be diffused through Italy, through Europe, what wonders it may work! If he could introduce it, what a name would belong to him! One and another in Pletho's audience show signs of the same delight as himself. The German Cusa listens as if he understood and could almost anticipate the meaning of the speaker. Cosmo finds a librarian who will assist him in gathering Greek manuscripts and in interpreting them. His physician gets strange hints from them respecting his own profession. All is ready. There was an Academy in Athens; there shall be one in Florence.

The man of the world.

Nicholas V.

Ficinus.

7. His own share in the work the physician's son clearly and modestly explains to us. His dedication is a transparent piece of autobiography. Cosmo trained him for the office which he held, set him to read the great Greek books, raised him into an editor and an academician. He reverences his patron, reverences the great author with whom he has become acquainted, reverences his friend Pico. He has, moreover, we perceive, a faith in the stars. He has been born under the same planet as Pico; they are both mysteriously associated with Plato. One of them receives communications from Cosmo after his departure from the earth. The other has undertaken Plato and is about to undertake Plotinus because he has been marked out for that work, because a divine energy is urging him on to the completion of it. There is much weakness, no doubt, in some of these confessions. Pletho would have smiled at them; many of those who speak much of the revival of letters will smile at them still more. But we venture to think that if Ficinus and his colleagues had been as free from this feeling about divine inspiration as the Greek was, they might have helped to reduce the Latin world to the same condition into which the Greek world had sunk; they never could have assisted in raising it out of its own degradation. MSS. would not have been studied. The immense difficulties of a foreign tongue and civilization could not have been surmounted. We may even be bold enough to suggest that if all thought of such an impulse to study as Ficinus speaks of is lost in our enlightened society, there may be a

Superstition.

Belief in an inspiration to study

return to what we call the darkness of the mediæval period or to a worse darkness than that.

The books to be translated.

8. The reader will no doubt have observed with some surprise what tasks those were to which Cosmo urged the man whom he had so carefully and liberally educated. First, he was to translate Hermes Trismegistus; then Plato. It was not, therefore, from any special admiration of the exquisite form and beauty of the Platonic dialogues that the scholars of the West desired to be acquainted with them. When one considers the delicacy of the Italian mind, its quick perception of all that is graceful and fair, what faculties had already been awakened in it, where, in the days of Boccaccio and Petrarch, it had sought for the nourishment of those faculties,—we might easily suppose that this was the point of attraction to him from whose lips the Hymettian honey fell so copiously. The fact is otherwise: Plato would hereafter teach his Latin scholars a refinement of thought and speech, which they could never have acquired while they were crouching at the feet of Aristotle. But men to whom no Attic charms belonged, are placed on the same level with him, are even in some sort preferred to him. The spirit of "the thrice great Hermes" is to be "unsphered,"—to be brought from the imaginary world in which it dwelt, before Plato could speak his Grecian dialect. The oracles of Plotinus are to interpret his; and are to be considered as containing a more advanced lore. Plato, therefore, is preferred to Aristotle, simply because he is accounted more of a theologian. He is only entitled to a middle place between teachers, inferior in all gifts to him, who speak more than he does of union with the Godhead and of the divine abysses.

Plato not studied for his beauty.

Difference between Cusa and these academicians.

9. It is needful to make this observation, that we may understand one capital defect in the new Platonic students. Ficinus will not lead us along in that line upon which Cusa had entered. That remarkable man perceived the unspeakable worth of the Socratic dogma about ignorance as the starting point of philosophy. Had the habits of his life and a more accurate scholarship enabled him to appreciate the unfolding of Plato's thoughts through those cross-questionings by which Socrates sifted the minds of others and his own, no one would have felt more keenly that this method answered exactly to the primary axiom,—that it expounded beautifully Ousa's own belief, that the highest truth is the conflux and reconciliation of contradictions. Even the humour of Socrates, we are persuaded, would have found something answering to it in the hearty Goth. But no such perception dawned upon the mind of Fieinus. The jests of Socrates must have seemed to him far below the dignity of philosophy. Perhaps he may not have wished that Plato had composed

Socrates ignored by Ficinus.

a system of philosophy. He knew too well what systems of philosophy had been to Western Europe,—what they were to his contemporaries. But he will often have murmured that he could only evolve the conclusions of the sage, out of intricate arguments, hints serious or ironical, discourses at feasts; and that even then he was not quite certain whether he had caught or missed the sense. It is wonderful that in spite of these obstructions Ficinus should have felt the power of Plato as a teacher, not that he should have sought for men who could lead him more straight to his goal.

Plotinus, why desired by Cosmo.

10. It is clear from that pleasant passage in the dedication of Ficinus, which refers to the kindly relations between the founder of the Academy and the professors in it,—so free from the insolence of patronage, exhibiting them as cordial fellow-workers,—that Cosmo entirely shared his feelings respecting Plotinus and Plato. He, as much as the translator, longed for the finished teacher, who was to fill up what was imperfect, and explain what was ambiguous, in the earlier one. No doubt this was the impression which he had received from the lectures of Pletho. That accomplished man must have appreciated and admired the style of Plato. But he will have despaired of making the refinements of his own tongue intelligible to foreigners. The worth of Socrates as a living teacher he will have apprehended even less than they, since he was more removed from the sphere of living interests. It will have been his object to present Platonism as a smooth, round system, like that which he desired that it should supplant. For this object Plato himself would not be sufficient. Plotinus must be called in to take off the sharp corners and edges of the controversial dialogue, to make the Academy as formal and respectable a place of instruction as the Porch. Why, however, it may be asked, should Cosmo, practical man as he was, have relished the sublimities of Plotinus better than the homely sense of Socrates? The answer has been given already. Cosmo and Ficinus were in pursuit of a theology more than of a philosophy—of a philosophy only as it connected itself with a theology. The search after wisdom was nothing to them, unless they believed that wisdom had been found. And just the difference between the Socratic Plato and the Plotinian Plato was, that the one sought, the other proclaimed that he had found.

Want of a theology.

The anti-Christian character of the Plotinian school.

11. An interesting and important question arises here. Pletho of course knew perfectly—Cosmo and Ficinus must soon have learnt—what position the schools which proceeded from Plotinus occupied in church history. They must have known that if he himself was silent, or almost silent, about the Christian revelation, the semi-rationalist Porphyry, the supernaturalist Iambli-

chus, were its direct opponents—that Julian combined something of the lessons of both, with a passionate and polemical worship of the old gods. Were these Italian teachers then secretly plotting to undermine the faith of the West? Was their new philosophy a contrivance for effecting the overthrow? Is the language in the dedication about the reconciliation of philosophers to the common faith and the special faith, a dishonest pretext to cover this design? Is the paganism which is said to have mingled itself with the Italian culture of the fifteenth century one of the results of the Platonic movement?

Honesty of those who founded the Academy.

12. To one and all of these questions we return an unhesitating No. Cosmo, Ficinus, Picus, were not men with a double purpose. They did not affect to be in accordance with the faith of their contemporaries while they were at heart denying it. They did not introduce Paganism into the Latin world. They were instruments, though not altogether effectual instruments, in counteracting it and retarding its complete victory. The more we look into the history of the men, especially into the history of Pico, the more we shall be certain that this must have been the case: the more we shall feel bound to resist any impressions, however plausible, which might lead us to an opposite conclusion. To us who have a great love for Plato, precisely because he was a seeker after wisdom, and because all his teaching implied that wisdom must reveal itself to the spirit which is waiting for it—to us who can find no comfort whatever in the cold abstractions of Plotinus, and who regard the thaumaturgic machinery of his Egyptian disciples as an inevitable escape from the dreariness in which he would have left them—the dream of Ficinus, that there was something profound and supernatural in the arrival of Pico on a certain day in Florence and that he had brought a special message from the unseen world respecting the Enneads, may be almost unintelligible. "Surely," we are inclined to exclaim, "these men were seeking for a goddess, and were embracing a cloud. Their hopes had a natural enough alliance with astrological superstition; with no other faith could they well assimilate." But these judgments are hasty and wrong. Where such heart is, there must be faith; and it must bring its reward, if not in the way that they expected, then in some better way. Were Ficinus and Cosmo wrong in thinking that they had in themselves a craving for the Infinite and the Eternal? Were they setting at nought their Christian education when they said that this education had roused in them that craving, had forbidden them to acquiesce in anything which did not satisfy it? Were they insulting the Christian revelation when they said that it claimed to be a revelation on this very ground,

Their Christian convictions.

that it met the deepest wants and aspirations of the human spirit? But men like Cosmo knew inwardly that the theology which was presented to them—which they were told to accept—did *not* meet any of these wants and aspirations; that it stifled them; that it offered the most finite notions as food to appease their hunger, or to terrify them into the endurance of it. And men like Ficinus thought that without arraigning severely the authorities of the church, they could account for complaints which they could not deny to be just. The explanation was not *this*, that the church had neglected philosophy,—had refused to have any dealings with that which was without the Divine imprimatur. But it was *this*, that the church had adopted a philosophy—a Pagan philosophy—which was confessedly a philosophy about the finite, which had become, though it might not be so in the hands of its founder a rejection of everything that is *not* finite. Was it unorthodox, uncatholic, unchristian, to say, and to prove that such a philosophy was not found sufficient by *Heathens;* that *they* demanded one which should *not* ignore the infinite—which should be essentially theological—which should recognize a direct relation between the human and divine? If the fact of such a relation was owned by those who had no direct information respecting it—if a communion with God had been sought for by men who did not see the ladder between earth and heaven which had been revealed in Christ, was this not the very highest evidence for the Gospel which a believer in it could desire?

The theology of the day.

Their quarrel with the existing philosophy.

Search after the Divine in all nations.

13. The history, uncritical and unsatisfactory enough no doubt, which Ficinus gives us of the birth and progress of philosophical inquiries in different ages and countries of the world, yet makes his object sufficiently clear, and had a sufficient ground of truth to warrant the inference which he drew from it. He might not know much of Hermes, or of Orpheus; but he was sure that, in some way or other, Egyptians, Greeks, Persians had been seeking after God. So much he could believe on the testimony of St. Paul and of his own human heart, if he had been without any other records to establish the fact. And what he says about the poets, proves clearly enough that he was not turning to Neo-Platonism, because he had a hankering for the old idolatry. Evidently he thought that the man who would not have a picture made of himself because it was only the shadow of a shadow, had a somewhat nervous dread of idolatry, and might help to deliver the Latins from their own inclinations towards it. For when we speak of the Paganism which the Greeks were to introduce, we should not altogether forget the Paganism which Latins of the fifteenth century saw on all sides of them. There was something which Western Christendom had

Latin idolatry.

received by tradition from its own fathers, of which it could not accuse the old masters of Constantinople, and which the new masters of it declared to be a direct apostasy from the teaching of Moses and the Prophets. The old wives' fables, which Ficinus says were disgusting all thoughtful and earnest men and were driving them to infidelity, might surely make him long for some powerful antidote to them. If this antidote came in the form of a philosophy which could not be suspected of any directly Christian bias, he might naturally and honestly suppose that it would do a work with one class which direct Christian teaching would not do; he might believe as honestly that that class would be useful and powerful agents in raising the tone of thought among Christians, rendering their faith less intolerable to the earnest convictions of Jews and Mahometans, and yet bringing out far more distinctly that portion of it which they rejected.

Mahometanism and Christianity

14. On this last point it may be well to make one or two remarks. The distinctive characteristic of Christianity, that it asserts an actual union between the Divine and human natures, was precisely that which Ficinus believed had been set at nought by both the sects which claimed Aristotle as their parent. He does not dwell upon the fact that the most popular of these sects had a Mahometan origin. It would have been a tempting argument for a special pleader who was attacking a current and orthodox system; but, much to his credit, Ficinus rejects it as unworthy of a lover of truth. Nevertheless, he could not be ignorant that Averroes had found Aristotle the most convenient philosopher for a disciple of the Koran, precisely because he treated of the world and of man without inquiring how they were related to the Absolute Being. So the Muftis might pronounce (philosophers approving) *their* condemnation of the heresy, that there has been One in the form of God, who took upon Him the form of a servant, and in whom God and man are united. Without condemning the Islamite philosophy on this ground, or impeaching it at all merely because it proceeded from an Islamite, Ficinus might be permitted to say that such a doctrine when it was imported into the Christian world and was presented in connection with Christian orthodoxy, could not fail to produce the greatest perplexity. If it solved the enigma of the universe—if it was the last message of philosophy—then, clearly, Christianity had no standing-ground; philosophy had not passed it by, but confuted it and disproved it.

General conclusions.

15. We are convinced, then, that Ficinus was not assuming the defence of Christianity as an excuse to himself for entering on these Platonical studies; but that, if this was not his first motive for engaging in them, it became, as he pursued them,

Influence of the new studies on different classes.

Lorenzo.

Sculptors and painters.

Architecture.

his principal if not his absorbing motive. And what effect did his zeal produce? Very little, we suspect, upon the philosophers whom he hoped to convert—very little upon the ecclesiastics whose tone of mind he hoped to elevate—very little directly upon the world which lay outside the Academy. A little upon the scholars who surrounded Lorenzo; inasmuch as the diligence of Ficinus in investigating the force of words and of sentences for the sake of a great end, quickened theirs for the sake of the words and sentences themselves, or of the fame which was to be acquired by composing in them and disputing about them. A little upon Lorenzo himself; inasmuch as the Platonic influences about him, besides leading him to make love and make songs in a Platonical fashion, raised the character of his mind and of his friendship, gave a magnificence to his projects and his patronage, prevented him from sinking into a mere politician or a mere tyrant. If one compares him with Cosmo, one feels his degeneracy; if one compares him with his descendants, the distance appears immeasurable. But *the* influence which we believe the Platonism of the Academy was destined to exert, was one for which all generations and all countries ought to be thankful. We tremble to think what Raphael, what Michael Angelo might have been at a moment when the new Greek culture was tending to awaken the keenest sense of outward beauty,—when the condition of Italian society was tending to connect this beauty with moral deformity—when that deformity was nowhere so hideous as in the men who would seek their aid for the adorning of churches, and for the services of Christian worship,—if they had not been surrounded by these high-souled Platonical teachers,—if they had not been told to look for spiritual beauty beneath visible forms, and to believe that the human face, as it may sink into the earthly and the devilish, has been the perfect image of the Divine. It is not true that Christian art then became heathen art, when it learnt from Greece what is the most perfect and beautiful form of the human countenance. But it might have become so, if this other part of Greek culture had not been granted at the same time—to work together with the images of the gods—to expand them and to elevate them. It is not true that the perfect forms of the Finite which Greek architecture presents, had any necessary tendency to stifle that sense of the Infinite which the Gothic architecture had nourished. But that might have been the effect, if there had not come at the same time, from the same Greece, a witness in behalf of the Infinite, one which, if received faithfully, could show both what the Greek builders had been striving to express in *their* temples, and what profound thoughts there had been in the mediæval mind, which all *its* foul superstitions could not extinguish.

Ficinus on miracles.

Mischief of his doctrine.

Medicean arts.

Medicean tyranny.

16. The latter part of this dedication seems to us its weakest part. When Ficinus begins to speculate about the arrangements of Providence in past ages, and in that age, we cannot find that his words yield us any light. Miracles, he tells us, had been the instruments of diffusing Christianity in the first century. If they could be had, they might do the same work now. As they were not granted philosophy must supply their place. Was he not contradicting the express testimony of Scripture when he assumed that signs and wonders had been the power which converted the world; that the simplest declaration of truth from the feeblest lips, and under every disadvantage, had not been the means of converting it? Was it not to be expected that so false a premiss would encourage the patrons of existing superstitions to try what they could do in devising signs and wonders utterly unlike those with which the Apostles confounded the enchanters of their day and testified of a God of truth; most like those of the men who resisted them? Was it not too probable that a philosopher starting from that premiss would wish to give philosophy itself a semi-miraculous character? Both these dangers were latent in the Florentine Academy. The new Platonic wisdom was not for the vulgar but for the wise. It was to withdraw men from the coarse beliefs of the surrounding world. But that surrounding world must in some way be provided for. It must be kept in faith; it must be kept in obedience. Since it could know nothing of philosophy and its aspirations after truth, it must be fed with wonders; in plain language, with lies. Here surely are lessons which the Medicean family—princes, rulers, women—too carefully and profoundly laid to heart. Here lies the secret of much of that wisdom which they were to display in the century that was coming, a wisdom which Ficinus would have confessed was not from above, but was earthly, sensual, devilish. Here lies the explanation of the willingness of Lorenzo to talk about the commonwealth of Plato, as well as to establish an Academy of Plato, and yet to keep the Florentines in chains—silken or golden chains perhaps—such as might be turned in a moment into the sharpest iron. The new Platonism of the West might possibly induce some students to think less scornfully of the faith of Christ, to bestow on it a respectful patronage, seeing that it was not rejected by all enlightened men. But it served also to make most of those whom it brought into this condition of half-belief, more aware of their own immense superiority to the mass of mankind—to cultivate the opinion that that mass was the natural and necessary victim of imposture and knavery.

Thaumaturgy of philosophers.

17. And it must not be concealed, that there was in the Platonism of the fifteenth century, as there had been in the Platonism of the third, a disposition to have miracles of its own—miracles for the initiated—as those which were wrought by relics and by pieces of the true cross were miracles for the ignorant. Had not the philosopher a glimpse into the hidden powers of nature, of which others knew nothing? He would not assent to the ordinary tricks of the magician and of the astrologer. But might there not be a kind of magic and astrology which he could separate from its vulgar accompaniments, and which he could use both in the investigation of truth, and as a remedy for actual evil? There were strange coincidences and conjunctures in human affairs. There were strange sympathies between man and nature. Picus and Ficinus were born under the same planet. A deep meaning might lie in all this—who could tell? And no men are so likely to forget as great academicians withdrawn from the work of the world, that there may be also infinite trifling in all this; that it may produce a habit of mind the most alien from the earnestness and calmness of either the philosopher or the theologian.

Tendency to flattery.

18. These superstitions, however, lay very near, as we have hinted already, to some of the noblest and best feelings of the Florentine Platonists—to feelings which generally served for their correction. The sense of a divine superintendence over their work, of a divine end in their work, if now and then it mingled with astrological fancies, made them also ashamed to indulge those fancies. They must have been all the more mischievous to those who had lower aims, to the mere dilettanti of the gardens, who will have had a ready excuse for smiling at men whom it would have done them good to respect, and for congratulating themselves that they did not share in the absurdities into which transcendent wisdom is sure to fall. But the other danger, that of flattering Lorenzo into the notion that he was a sage and devout ruler because he could write graceful poems and discourse on Platonical ideas, was far more serious. That flattery tended to divorce philosophy and practice. It was a repetition of the terrible error which Plato himself committed in his transactions with Dionysius. It makes us feel that whatever truth there may have been—and there was a very deep truth—in the remark of Ficinus, that mere preaching, such as was wont to be heard in the Italian pulpits, could never recall men to the faith of their fathers, and that the philosophers had a work committed to them which the preachers were not qualified to perform; yet that there was need of stern and awful preaching, such as could not proceed from the professor's chair, to raise Florence and Italy, to declare that faith and liberty were

Lorenzo the victim of it.

Need of a reprover.

perishing together, and that the most distinguished patronage of art and literature could not save them.

Pico to Lorenzo. A.D. 1484.

19. One whose eyes were opened at length to this truth had written these words in a letter to Lorenzo :—" I have read thy poems, Lorenzo, those, I mean, which the muses of our own land inspired thee with in thy tender youth. I have recognized in them the legitimate offspring of the muses and graces; the age at which they were produced, I did not discover. . . . . .
I wish that I could tell thee, without suspicion of flattery, what I think of them. I would assure thee that there is not one of our old writers whom, in this style, thou hast not left far behind thee. That thou mayest not think that I am speaking merely to please thee, I will give thee the reasons of my opinion. We have two specially celebrated poets in our own Florentine tongue, Francesco Petrarca and Dante Alighieri, about whom I may make this general remark, that learned men complain of a defect of matter in Petrarch, of diction in Dante. In thee, any one who has a mind and ear will miss neither one nor the other. He will find it hard to determine whether the matter is more illustrated by the style, or the style by the matter." The rest of a long letter is occupied in establishing these two important positions by arguments; the author paying his Medicean friend the compliment of supposing that he might need some help before he could arrive at a full conviction of their truth. Let it be said in all justice, that these words proceeded from no needy parasite who looked to receive some tangible recompense for his praise, but from a young, enthusiastic, most accomplished, most high-minded nobleman, who had all the treasures a man could want. What he spoke he spoke no doubt from his heart. The Medicean Prince was his friend, not his patron. But such words from a friend tell us what Lorenzo must have been accustomed to hear from ordinary sycophants.

Lorenzo superior to Dante and Petrarch.

Life of Pico.

20. We have introduced Pico of Mirandola to our readers in this disadvantageous manner, on purpose that they may know the worst of him at once, and may not be scandalized by discovering hereafter that there were weaknesses in him which might seem to make the admiration of Ficinus, and of all his friends, unreasonable. There is no life which illustrates more strikingly than his the history of this time, its temptations and the triumph which might be won over them; no one which, within the short space that was allotted to it on earth, was on the whole more elevating. The narrative of it comes to us from his nephew; a worshipper of him and of other heroes; anxious to tell us whatever he thinks would glorify them most, but rather too fond of omitting the facts we should care most to know, and of introducing marvels which we should be glad to

escape. He is at all events affectionate and filial; imposing upon his readers nothing which he does not thoroughly believe himself.

Prodigies before his birth.

21. The family of Pico believed that they could trace their descent to the Emperor Constantine; they were at all events acknowledged as relatives by the existing Emperor Maximilian. Giovanni was born in the year 1463, of a mother belonging to a family scarcely less illustrious than that of her husband. Prodigies announced the birth of the last of her children: a circular flame appeared to her while she was in travail, but speedily vanished, insinuating to her (so his nephew explains the sign) that the boy would have an intellect altogether complete and globular; that his mind would always, like the flame, seek the heavens; that there would be a fire in his heart and on his lips; but that his glory would speedily be hidden from the eyes of men. The probability of this interpretation is established by a comparison with similar omens vouchsafed to the mothers of other illustrious men; the biographer not only being able to verify the stories, but to explain them. The child, who grew up under these happy or threatening auguries, became remarkable for his rapidity in learning, and for the tenacity of his memory. He was designed for orders; at fourteen he was sent to Bologna that he might be perfected in civil and canon law. He mastered the papal decretals as easily as he learned poems by heart; but he wearied of "a discipline which seemed to him merely formal and traditional, for he desired to explore the secrets of nature, and to give himself to the contemplation of human and divine philosophy." His ardour to be acquainted with all theological dogmas and controversies was not prompted by any sense of a vocation for clerical work, however his mother may have desired him to feel it. He sought knowledge like the old Greeks, for its own sake. He visited Paris; he frequented most of the universities in his own land; he came to Rome furnished with the stores which the school-learning of the former ages and the finer literature of the new age could supply to one who had all inward capacities, all outward means and appliances, for the acquisition. He contrived to master Hebrew and Chaldaic, as well as Greek. He understood the Arabic commentators on the old philosophy. He was not less a master of all the learning of the Scotists because he was also profound in Aquinas. Neither one nor the other hindered him from seeking that grounded acquaintance with the ancient Hellenic masters which they could not give.

A prodigy himself.

His acquirements.

Pico disputing at Rome.

22. Pico had no wish to hide his treasures; the world was to be aware of them, and to profit by them. At Rome he challenged young and old to fight him with his own weapons or with theirs. The fifteenth century was the age for such encounters. The

capital was a tempting place for them. There the ablest and best trained opponents were sure to come. The judge of all opinions was within hearing. No doubt it required the confidence of youth to have the risk of an adverse decision from him. But the Popes were the patrons of literature and discussion. A Medicean was on the throne. He certainly would not hinder an over-vigorous scholar, of an illustrious race, from wasting his strength in dialectical battles, if that was his inclination. It would be time for the ruling powers to interfere when their interference was invoked. It soon was invoked in the case of Pico. The professional traders in theses and disputations by no means relished the intrusion of a young nobleman, full of all personal and external advantages, into their arena, especially one who treated their traditional maxims with indifference and was a master of arts which they did not possess. The only cry which was likely to be effectual, the cry of heresy, was raised against him. No doubt there was much plausible evidence for the accusation. But Pico was able to defend his orthodoxy in a learned apology addressed to Innocent VIII. The pontiff seems to have received it benignantly; but he desired that a list of the conclusions at which Pico had arrived might not be published at the end of the discourse; they were at all events fit only for learned ears; they might mislead the faithful.

Charge of heresy.

23. In the opening of this treatise, Pico addresses Innocent as worthy of the name which he had taken. Such language reads to us like grave and cruel irony. The fact is, that Pico was not exactly a judge at this time of the innocency which is required of a prelate, or of a man. He was not only endowed with all gifts of learning, of birth, of fortune; he was also, says his nephew, of lofty stature, graceful figure, beautiful countenance, keen and brilliant eyes. Imagine such a man the popular disputer, in a city such as the Rome of the fifteenth century is described, not by incompetent or prejudiced judges, but by Lorenzo in that celebrated letter to his son which Mr. Roscoe has translated! And surely no man was less armed against the attractions of sensual beauty than one who knew all the maxims of philosophy and theology by heart, and was using them for dialectical and rhetorical exercises. That some out of the fair disciples who paid him court obtained a perilous dominion over him, his nephew heard him confess. He tells us on the same authority how the chains were broken. Pico looked back upon the envious slanderers who surrounded him in Rome as his divinest benefactors. Their charges he could refute; but they awakened an accuser within him whom he could not refute. He discovered that the truths he had played with were given him for another end than debate and self-glorification. Henceforth

His life in Rome.

His renovation.

he regarded them as precious instruments of moral purification. Philosophy began to be indeed the pursuit after wisdom; theology the knowledge of God. He discovered that neither could be separated from constant vigilance over his own heart, from self-suspicion, and self-sacrifice. The least of all his efforts was probably that which made him a bountiful dispenser of his wealth to suffering scholars, to virgins about to marry, to all who were in need. For he seems never to have known the worth of money, or to have had any strong temptation to employ it selfishly, except in the purchase of books. It must have been a much harder struggle to overcome the love of disputation which was so deeply rooted in him. He did, however, win this victory. Once very reluctantly he yielded to the wishes of an Italian prince, that he should argue publicly in support of some thesis. But those who listened felt what a change had come over him since he held his prize fights in Rome; such consideration did he show for his adversary, such a desire to make his arguments subordinate to the pursuit of truth not to the triumph of his opinion.

Fruits of the change.

He is more than ever a philosopher.

24. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that this great change in the moral being of Pico did not induce him to abandon any of the studies in which he had been occupied, to eschew the reading of profane authors, or to count their wisdom dangerous. He was too conscious of a calling from God, too anxious to repair the errors he had committed from confounding it with the exaltation of himself, for such a result to be possible. The old man which he cast off with its affections and lusts was not a former age in his life, but the evil and death which he felt were ever cleaving to him, and out of which he could only rise by recollecting that he had a divine parentage and was meant to possess the divine image. How to maintain the battle with himself, how to help other men in fighting their battles, was his great object, in pursuing which he abjured no help of any kind that had been vouchsafed to him, holding all which we call human and earthly endowments as gifts from above. He appears to have had no settled habitation, to have counted himself a pilgrim and sojourner. Now and then he formed grand projects of going from one land to another, using his learning for the conversion of the nations; more than once he almost resolved to enter the Dominican Order. But his strongest attraction was towards Florence. He was attached to Ficinus, to Politian, to Lorenzo. And another man dwelt there who spoke to deeper feelings in him than any of these could have awakened or could satisfy—a man who perhaps rashly advised him to enter his own Order, perhaps was displeased when he listened to the suggestion without yielding to it, but who certainly must

His friends in Florence.

have strengthened him, if he needed strengthening, to decline the offers of the Pope that he should become a titled ecclesiastic; so throwing the veil of his nobleness over the corruptions of a class which he believed, and which his friend believed, was drawing down curses upon Italy and upon Europe. It was in the city of Lorenzo that Pico was attacked by a fever, which took him from his admiring and loving friends before he had reached his thirty-second year. Girolamo Savonarola preached his funeral sermon, wherein he spoke of the wisdom of the man they had lost—of his faith and charity. But it was added that Pico had failed in one great purpose of his life, and that he would have to undergo certain purgatorial fires though they had been lessened by his earnest devotion.

His death.

His books.

25. Savonarola may perhaps have wished in after days that he had not ventured to define so accurately the future condition of his friend, who would certainly undergo, as he himself would, all the fires that were needful for his good, here or elsewhere. Our business is with the works which he accomplished during his short stay upon earth. They may not answer to the conceptions and anticipations which his friends formed of him, but they prove him to have possessed a clear philosophical instinct and a decided mastery of the subjects which he treated. Of his Apology, to which we have alluded already, we shall say nothing. His books on astrology, the most elaborate of his writings, were composed not to strengthen but to overthrow a prevalent superstition, and to connect whatever faith in the stars he had with science and with the worship of God. His speech or lecture on the Dignity of Man is eloquent and characteristic; but as he did not intend it for publication, it ought not to be reckoned among his more finished productions. The treatise of "Being and Unity" (*De Ente et Uno*) is that which we are most concerned with, and which probably is the best representation of his intellect and his character. The circumstances relating to it are interesting, and it is in itself a great help in the interpretation of the philosophical movement of the fifteenth century.

Opera, pp. 159-169.

Dedication to Politian, p. 158.

26. During one of those visits to Florence, the suddenness of which may partly account for the impression on the mind of Ficinus that the appearance to him was miraculous, Pico found Lorenzo and Politian disputing about Plato and Aristotle. Politian had just published an edition of the *Nicomachæan Ethics*, and was naturally eager on behalf of his own author. Lorenzo, a Platonist by profession, was vigorously impugning the Porch and exalting the Academy. It had been long the faith of Pico, that these philosophers were less at variance than their followers chose to fancy. He seems to have taken no very active part in the argument, but to have supported generally

Florentine questions.

Pico a reconciler.

the opinion of Politian. Delighted, perhaps surprised at finding an ally in one who had entered so deeply into the philosophy which Lorenzo patronized,—whom Ficinus recognized as his brother Platonist, and as being more initiated into Platonic mysteries than himself,—Politian begged for a further exposition of his views. To him the book of which we are speaking is addressed. Whether Mirandula had reason to think that his friend did not reach even the standard of morality which the book he had edited would have set before him, or whether he looked at him, as he did at many others, through the mists of affection, we cannot tell. At all events he took what seems to us a very wise and noble method of preventing the Platonists of the day from losing the moral benefits which they might derive from the study of their teacher in a sectarian partiality for certain opinions which they attributed to him, and also of raising the disciples of Aristotle to a higher point of view than their ordinary one, while he asserted in perfect good faith and honesty what he took to be the metaphysical principles of *their* doctor.

To what part of Aristotle's writings the treatise refers.

Supposed disagreement of Plato and Aristotle.

The true meaning of Plato.

27. For, as the reader will perceive, it is not the book with which Politian was occupied that engages the attention of Pico. The subject indicated by the title of the treatise is scarcely alluded to in the Ethics, while it is the main subject of the Metaphysics. We shall discover presently that this choice of a topic is no proof that Pico cared less about ethics, in the most practical sense of that word, than about abstract and transcendent questions. He could not have accomplished his immediate purpose (or what we conceive was his ultimate purpose), if he had not addressed himself to this subject. Those who professed themselves to be Platonists *purs et simples*, insisted that Unity had been distinguished from Being by Plato, and had been exalted above Being; that, on the contrary, Being according to Aristotle is identical with Unity. This was *the* point on which the philosophers were supposed to disagree; this was *the* carcase about which the partizans were fighting and would fight endless word battles. No good, Pico saw, could come out of such fights; nothing but weariness and vexation to those who were engaged in them; nothing but dishonour to both the illustrious men who were supposed to have thought and lived for the sake of a hair'sbreadth difference, and yet had been worthy to lead the minds of whole ages. Their commentator devoutly believed that they had not been such word splitters. Plato, he was sure, had pursued after Being, after that which is, with the most intense and practical zeal. He had not desired to set the One above this. He only desired to show how all things are tending towards Unity, are finding their purpose in it. The

pursuit of Unity in that sense, and in that sense only, became a higher pursuit than that of Being; not as if they were or could be divided, but only that as *each* thing finds its foundation in the Being, so *all* things find their ground in the One.

Pico's critical ability.

28. This, if we understand him aright, is the doctrine of Pico respecting Plato, and it appears to us sound doctrine. In evolving it, especially in answering the arguments on the other side which were deduced from the "Parmenides" and the "Sophistes," he exhibits more of the critical faculty than we think belonged to his time or than had been imparted to his friend Ficinus. The dialectical wars in which Pico himself had taken part, enabled him to understand better the nature of a dialectical method, and to see how Plato was bringing such a method into light when his commentators supposed that he was enunciating some dogmatical conclusion. In the *direct* argument which Pico uses on behalf of Aristotle, he is perhaps equally successful. Dealing only with the ontological, or as we call them, the metaphysical, treatises of the great master, he has little difficulty in showing that he was no disparager of Unity, any more than Plato was a disparager of Being. And by pressing the εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω into his service, illustrated as it is by the most eloquent passage in the Metaphysics, he is able to maintain with great plausibility and force, that Aristotle no less than Plato regarded Being and Unity as meeting in God, and as vital objects for human search because they meet in Him. But if we look, not at the actual reasoning in which he is triumphant, but at the *result* of the reasoning—at that which seems to be implied in it—we shall be obliged to admit that Pico was, quite unconsciously, a party to a sophism. With him the belief in God is everything. All practical morality, all the ascent of man out of evil to good, out of darkness to light, rests upon the faith that Being, Truth, Goodness, Unity, are *in* Him as their object, become *through* Him the inheritance of the creatures whom He has made. Now that *Plato* was searching after such Being, Truth, Goodness, Unity, as are only expressed in a living God, even when the Name is not on his lips, is to us abundantly evident. The *Republic* would decide the question if the other dialogues had not decided it. But that *Aristotle*, because he recognizes one Being as the postulate of the universe, as affording the most reasonable centre for its order, therefore attaches any *ethical* significance to the Name of God, or connects it in more than the faintest degree with the acts and energies of the human soul, cannot, we think, be affirmed in the face of the treatises which bear directly upon the nature of the human soul; still more of that treatise which Politian had translated, and which ought by itself to be accepted as decisive.

The Aristotelian.

Where the argument is not satisfactory.

Result of the treatise.

29. The effect, then, of this able treatise upon our minds is this: it seems to us to get rid of the *external* differences between the two masters—the mere points of difference between an academic and a peripatetic school—most successfully; and thus to remove a vast quantity of rubbish which had been accumulating for many centuries, and which might receive additions from the coming centuries. And so far as Pico did this service to the world, so far also he did service to the fame of the great men whom he so sincerely honoured. But by thus clearing the ground, he made the *radical* difference of the two teachers more, not less conspicuous. He showed why those who were least inclined to range themselves in an Aristotelian or Platonic school, must yet exhibit habits of mind which characterize the one sage or the other; must pursue different routes; must often, —if not always, or of necessity,—misunderstand each other. At the same time, we are convinced that Pico did discover the one way by which such misunderstandings may be removed. In the practical Christian faith, the fervent worship of God, which appeared in his life, which give the tone and the morai to this treatise, lies the secret of the philosophical agreement which he longed to produce. We may entirely dissent from his opinion that the pseudo-Areopagite was a higher teacher than those who adorned his supposed city in the earlier ages; we may think that heavenly hierarchies have greatly interfered with that simple revelation of truth which would best answer to their aspirations after it; but we may accept the principle while we abandon the form of his assertion. If for Dionysius we substitute a man whose preaching on Mars Hill is supposed to have wrought conviction in his soul, we may fully admit that the God who was not made in the likeness of art or man's device, but of whom men are the offspring, is that one Being whom Plato, with conscious belief and hope, desired to behold as the ground of the human spirit and its goal —whom Aristotle confessed as the Creator and Ruler of the world's order. We may admit that when the Divine Ideal becomes realized in an actual Person, cognizable by Man, communicating His Spirit to man, the Aristotelian and Platonic ethics are also harmonized. The moral habits of the human soul it acquires by participation of His nature; its moral energies by receiving His life.

The opposition brought out.

The practical reconcillation.

How Pico answered objectors.

30. Such habits and such energies Pico assuredly sought to cultivate in himself and in his fellow-men, by assiduous converse with Him whom he confessed as *the* Being and *the* One. He was, in the truest sense, an Aristotelian Platonist, discarding none of the helps which the one master offered for the actual business of earth, because the other taught him that he should

be content with nothing less than a heavenly birth. The reconciliation in his own mind and practice was complete. How it was produced might be seen in the gentleness with which he encountered objections to his scheme of reconciliation. Some of these were raised at first, in a sharp and pugnacious temper, by one of his fellow-citizens, a friend of his family, considerably older than himself. The opponent was unacquainted with the Greek lore, but was a passionate worshipper of Aquinas, zealous for the traditions of his fathers. He is evidently mystified by the course of argument which the reconciler has adopted in his treatise. He has not a conception of its purpose, but he raises plausible and not unskilful objections to certain of his positions. The grace and courtesy with which Pico replies—his thankfulness for the not very gentle corrections which had been administered to him, even though they had not shaken his opinion in the least degree—present a curious contrast to the savage retorts of Gennadius and Pletho, and show that the chivalrous and Christian education of the West had not been lost upon the young Italian nobleman even when he became a philosophical disputant. His soft words turned away the wrath of his reprover, without diminishing his zeal in the cause. In the second and third answers of Pico there appears a little more irritation than in the first. Though he never forgets his good breeding, he hints once or twice to his antagonist that he might be a better judge of Plato and Aristotle if he understood something of the language in which they wrote; and he evidently dislikes the trouble of slaying the same foes repeatedly. It was true of this controversy, as of most controversies, that there was nothing in the nature of things, or in the convictions of the disputants, to hinder it from lasting out the natural life of one or other of them. It was scarcely terminated by the death of Pico. His nephew gallantly rushed into the lists as the heir of his relation's opinions and the champion of his fame. The letters, *pro* and *con*, being unusually gentlemanlike, may be read at this day, not exactly with satisfaction, but as useful mementoes of the little result which is likely to follow when even the best and most respectable antagonists are fighting for certain conclusions, without having settled the premises from which they are to start, or with a suppressed premiss in the mind of each whereof the other knows nothing.

Character of the dispute.

Transition to Savonarola.

31. We have already said that this admirable specimen of the new Italian school knew and loved Girolamo Savonarola. They were not bound to each other either by philosophical sympathies or by affection for the Medicean family. One of the latest German biographers of Savonarola justly complains of his own countrymen for attaching an importance to the dogmas of the

illustrious preacher and patriot which does not belong to them. Savonarola,* he remarks, was a disciple of Aquinas, as it behoved a Dominican to be. There was no disposition in him to revolt against the method or the maxims of the *Summa Theologiæ;* small affection for the new Platonism while he contemplated it at a distance; still less when be was brought into close contact with it. Yet true as this remark is, important as it is for the purpose of ascertaining the position of the man and the secret of his power, we should be committing a great mistake if we supposed that he was not entitled to a place in a philosophical history, or that it was possible to understand the Academy and Lorenzo without noticing the Convent of San Marco and the man who ruled it, and from it Florence, with an authority which never belonged to any Medicean prince.

Die Kirche Christi und ihre Zeugen. von Friedrich Böhringer. Band 2; abtheilung 4. Zurich, 1958.

See Jerome Savonarola d'apres les documens les originaux par F. T. Perrens. Paris, 1856; p. 43.

32. When Savonarola first appeared in Florence as a preacher of the Preaching Order, there was everything in him to repel hearers, nothing to attract them. His voice was unpleasant and feeble; he had apparently no one of the qualities which could make a pulpit orator acceptable to any audience, still less to an Italian audience, least of all to the audience of a refined and philosophical city like Florence. It is one indication of the clear instinct which Pico of Mirandola possessed for the discernment of greatness, and therefore one test of his own greatness, that he recognized a powerful man under all the disguise of external weakness, of a Dominican costume, of tastes and inclinations opposed to his own, and that he urged Lorenzo to recall him to San Marco from a mission which he was performing in the other parts of Italy. The application was not immediately successful. Lorenzo had an instinct as well as Pico; perhaps he foresaw in the monk a foe to his dynasty, if not to himself. When Savonarola returned, he is said to have made very cold replies to Lorenzo's advances, and to have set up the dignity of a monk against the dignity of a prince. Some of his less friendly judges suspect him of knowing and resenting the reluctance of Lorenzo to comply with the wishes of his friend. It seems far more probable that there was a natural antipathy

Savonarola and Lorenzo.

See Perrens, liv. i., cap 4.

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* Böhringer's criticism deserves to be extracted for the sake of its subject, and as a warning to English biographers of pre-Reformation heroes:—"Beide, *Rudelbach wie Meier*, schrieben wie Dogmatiker über Savonarola, dessen Eigenthümlichkeit und historische Bedeutung nur gar nicht in den Dogmen liegt, in denen er durchschnittlich den Scholastikern, zunächst dem Thomas, folgte; Rudelbach ausserdem vom Standpunkt eines streng Lutherischen Theologen, einseitig das Eine hervorhebend, Anderes liegen lassend, mehr einzelne Aeusserungen herausgreifend als das Ganze der theologischen Anschauungen S's beachtend."—Preface, p. ix.

between the graceful patron of art and the stern denouncer of moral evil; that they eyed each other from the first with a kind of suspicion, as men who had entirely different objects, and whose objects might some day come into direct and fierce collision. What good Lorenzo's influence *was* doing, or might do for Italy, the education Savonarola had received, and the habits he had formed in the cloister, did not qualify him to perceive. What it was *not* doing, what it could not do, he saw all too clearly. That there was a moral slavery, a political slavery in every part of his land; that Lorenzo was not breaking this slavery, but investing it with charms—undermining some of the influences which might overthrow it and restore life and faith to the nation—seemed to him unquestionable. For pagan art and literature to restore a Christendom that was sunk in filth and crime, was to his mind the most absolute impossibility.

His relation to the new literature and philosophy.

33. Not that Savonarola, at least during the life of Lorenzo, appears to have proclaimed any crusade against his favourite pursuits. Not that he believed the evil which oppressed Italy was lying in them, or could be removed by bringing back scholasticism and barbarous Latin. The sins of the ecclesiastics —not of the philosophers and men of letters—were, he was sure, eating out the heart of the people; were bringing down the judgments of God upon his country. Here was the root of the evil; here was *the* abomination which required to be redressed. The philosophers and men of letters were tolerating it, smiling at it, participating in it. Their sons were bred up for the high offices in the Church, to receive its revenues; to bring new skill into its intrigues; to make its immoralities more refined; to mingle a deeper and subtler unbelief with that which the scandals of the priesthood had already diffused through all classes. But *these* were the true enemies of the Dominican. These hated him with the hate of theologians and the hate of convicted criminals at once. Against these, he believed, his Order existed to testify, though the testimony in that day had become a poor and feeble one. However little faith he had in the philosophers as reformers of the age, he met with an appreciation from them which he never could obtain from the priests. They saw that he was honest; they confessed his power; they were conscious that his denunciations were directed against real evils in the world, against a real feebleness in themselves. Lorenzo might not feel that he was bound to make the Florentine people free, or to correct any of the flagrant abuses of the time in obedience to the commands of Savonarola; but he was glad to have him beside his dying bed, and to receive the last sacraments from his hand.

War with ecclesiastics.

34. It is after the death of Lorenzo that the career of Savonarola

Savonarola under the successor of Lorenzo.

as a prophet-ruler of Florence strictly begins. But the foundations of the rule over the city were laid in the convent of San Marco. He did not aspire to fashion anew the life and social order of other men, till he had reformed that body which had been established at first as a pattern to the Church and to the world. Here, we conceive, lay the strength as well as the weakness of this champion of righteousness and of freedom. His soul was formed upon the Dominican model. To escape from the horrible corruptions and evils which were pressing down his spirit, even when he was a boy, he fled from his father's house and joined himself to the Preaching Order. In it he learnt to rise above a mere selfish spiritualism. From it he derived his idea of society. It was, as we have so often had occasion to observe, an idea that excluded all that immense portion of the divine constitution which is expressed in human relationships. God, it contemplated not through these, but in one sense as directly opposed to these. And for this reason, as we conceive, the Order was sure to decline from its own standard. Its members would revenge themselves for the loss of their rights as men, by often becoming more merely animal than those who possessed them. But then, if a man came among them with a deeply grounded conviction of what that standard was from which they had fallen, with a resolution that they should recover it, what noble struggles might he pass through! What great principles and truths might he realize, even though he might never repair, or wish to repair, the original flaw! What perceptions he might acquire of a law of right governing not individuals only but bodies of men! What glimpses he might have of a government, just, paternal, exercised over the spirits of men—grounded on eternal right—and therefore not dependent on faction or mere cleverness; therefore as unlike as possible to the tyranny of the Italian cities! In the effort to establish such a government over one particular convent in which he had a right to exercise authority, how the oppositions and perplexities of tempers, of which the mere solitary devotee knows nothing, to which the mere worldly man adjusts himself without attempting to overcome them, will have forced themselves upon him! What stores of political thought, even of administrative experience he may thus have acquired! How easy it will have been afterwards to transfer those thoughts and experience to another sphere. Yet how terrible will that trial have been! How likely was the best man to commit the greatest mistakes in applying the rules of the convent to the management of an ordinary human society! But how certain, at the same time, that through all these mistakes his purpose would make itself manifest—that he would leave benefits and lessons to man-

Essentially a Dominican.

How the monk became a politician.

kind—that he himself and his own fame would be the chief sufferers.

35. Although Savonarola might find nothing in the new Platonism, even when it came recommended by the piety, the moderation, and the friendship of Pico, to withdraw him from his allegiance to the regular school doctors, it was quite certain that they would not be his guides and helpers, when he entered upon the task of moral and political reformation. Nor would the books of the New Testament, the Gospels, or the Epistles of St. Paul, be the substitutes for Peter Lombard and Aquinas. The old Jewish prophets, the men who had cried out against the sins of Judah and Jerusalem,—who had seen in the crimes of other nations, and, above all, of their own, the certain sign of approaching days of the Lord, these would be his handbooks. With these, in spite of all the differences of circumstances,—in spite of his ignorance of the language in which they were written, and of the obscurity of particular passages,—he would hold the most living communion,—he would understand them as no commentators, Rabbinical or Patristic, had been able to understand them. The conditions of Italy would reveal to him the conditions of Palestine. He would be certain that the judgments which they foresaw in their day would come to pass in his day. This was the ground and justification of language which startled his contemporaries, even while they bowed before it, and which has drawn down upon him the severest condemnation of the cool critics of subsequent days. "If I lie, then the Lord has lied," was one of his favourite expressions, which, like many of the utterances of earnest men in all times, is capable of a blasphemous interpretation, and did very easily pass into a daring assumption of infallibility in the speaker; but which expressed to him, in his truest and most habitual state of mind, only the assurance that the God of other ages was the God of that age; that His purposes and methods did not change—that what He had spoken would certainly come to pass. And so long as he confined himself to the assertion, that such crimes as he knew to be committed by religious men and to be poisoning the whole of Italian society, would bring the same vengeance which Jeremiah or Amos had denounced against the priests, people, and prophets, of their own land; so long as he affirmed Charles VIII. or any other invader of the soil of Italy, to be not merely the agent of his own ambition, but to be the executor of divine justice; so far, it seems to us, he spoke a truth, and a truth which he was bound to speak. His weakness comes out, not when he followed his Hebrew guides, but when he deserted them; when the superstition of his age led him to dwell upon imaginary coincidences, or chance fulfilments of

How the schoolmen are deserted for the prophets.

How they were interpreted to him.

His own prophecies.

his predictions,—which *they* would have treated as trivial, or left other men to discover if they existed; or when the abstraction from common interests and ordinary patriotism which was natural to a Dominican led him to welcome, as a predestined deliverer, the Frenchman whom he should have regarded only as a predestined scourge. He might think, indeed, that he was fallen upon the times of Jeremiah, when even temporary captivity in a foreign land was to be welcomed by the Jewish patriot as a deliverance from the petty tyrants who were preying upon his own soil. But even then he should have received the invader with lamentations, not congratulations. And if he had a right to hope for Florence at all,—if his expectations of Reformation were not absolutely vain,—should he not have rather bidden his hearers see in Charles a Sennacherib, who, when he had done his work on a hypocritical nation and had roused it to a trust in God, would be forced to return with shame to his own land? Should he not have owned at first what he was compelled to own at last, that—

> "In native swords and native ranks
> The only hope of freemen dwells?"

Savonarola a Florentine.

36. This *detachment* from Italian feelings (to use a happy phrase, which a modern Romanist has invented to show how little the modern religious participate in the *attachment* to soil and kindred, which so eminently characterized the inspired Hebrews, St. Paul above all the rest), might have led one perhaps to expect that Savonarola, in the general interest of faith and morality, would have overlooked the particular conditions of the place to which he belonged. The inference would be altogether an erroneous one. Though Florence was only the city of his adoption, he became passionately, even exclusively devoted to its well-being. He threw himself into its old feud with Pisa; he practically sanctioned that rivalry of the cities which one imagines to have been the great curse of mediæval Italy. In this instance also one discovers the truthfulness and earnestness of the preacher as well as his infirmity. He had felt it necessary to separate San Marco from the other Dominican convents of Italy at the hazard of incurring the censure both of the Superior of the Order and of the Pope himself—at the hazard even of violating the idea of the Founder; that at least one society might exhibit the strictness which was demanded of all. In like manner, when he had a hope of extending the influence of this convent beyond its walls, when he felt that he, like the old prophets, might pull down and destroy and build up a civil government, he would not lose himself in aspirations after some general restoration of the universe or of Christendom. He would try whether he could not establish a righteous and

Explanation of his exclusiveness.

divine order among that people who were within the range of his influence. If it was the righteous and true government, other states would in time feel its influence. Florence would be a city set upon a hill that could not be hid. All the cities of Italy, all the nations of Europe would be strengthened and reformed by its example. They might receive the law of the Lord from its mouth. The calculation was not a false one. The testimonies to the wonder which Savonarola excited in all parts of Christendom, nay, even among Islamites, cannot be gainsayed. What are the so-called miracles which his credulous biographers have recorded of him, compared with the actual miracles which he wrought upon the minds of those who must have been quite unwilling to confess the presence of a political power derived from no political intrigue, setting at nought all the ordinary resources of statesmanship. And it was impossible for them to deny that the power of Savonarola was exerted after the expulsion of the Medicean dynasty with a freedom from mere theoretical notions about forms of government, yet with a clear knowledge of those forms and of their history—with a practical good sense and determination that what was best for the then circumstances of Florence and the temperament of its people should not be sacrificed to any ideal of what was best in his own mind or in the minds of others—such as very few reformers and organizers in any day have been able to exhibit. And however great his primary error may have been in expecting help to reformation from the foreigner, however much the exposure of that vain dream ought to have enlightened him respecting the limitation of his own prophetical powers, it should not be forgotten that no one did more to avert the evil which the friendship or the enmity of Charles might have caused, no one more taught the citizens ultimately that the hope of any good must be in God and not in the reed of French help, which would go into their hands and pierce them.

His widely spread influence.

His good sense in selecting a form of government.

37. Florence, so Savonarola proclaimed, was the city of the Lord Jesus Christ. It had taken Him for its King, therefore it could afford to dispense with a visible ruler or prince; although, as the preacher believed, monarchy was in itself the best and most desirable kind of government. Naturally enough such a proclamation as this appears to modern politicians, to French politicians especially, identical with the establishment of a priestly or ecclesiastical dominion which should supersede the ordinary civil dominion. But one who read the old Scriptures as Savonarola read them, could never for a moment fancy that the Jewish theocracy meant the rule of priests. The priest has *a* position in the Jewish commonwealth; but it is never the leading position. Before the establishment of the kingdom Law

The theocracy.

Not a priestly ascendency.

stood above the fancies and superstitions of the priest, put them down and trampled on them. If the priest, like the first of them, dares to invade the Law and be the leader in any popular superstition, the divine history sets its brand upon him. After the kingdom was established, every heir of David who is represented as a righteous man, a true believer in the covenant, rises up to sweep away some abomination of visible immoral worship which priests had sanctioned and priest-ridden monarchs had established. Every prophet, even if he is of the sacerdotal order himself, is more a reprover of that order and of the false prophets than of any other portion of the society. He reproves them in the name of the Lord God. He declares His judgments against them. Of course, if the Lord God is merely represented in the priest, a sacerdotal hierarchy is the same thing as a theocracy. But as the Jewish nation lived to declare that He is *not* merely represented in the priest, that He is a living and righteous and present Judge, who appoints all and punishes all, their theocracy was such a protest against civil as well as ecclesiastical tyranny as no believers in the sovereignty of the people have ever been able to create. All Savonarola's acts and words prove that he understood the Florentine theocracy in *this* sense. He believed the invisible government to be a real, not an imaginary one. He announced it as the one government which could be efficient for the control of wicked priests and wicked laymen; which could enable the people of Florence to be a just and righteous people, such as all the art, philosophy, and policy of Medicean rulers never had made them or could make them. But though this was undoubtedly his conception and purpose, he was bewildered at every turn by the notions of theocracy which belonged to his age and to his convent. The priest, the vicar of Christ, had taken the place of Christ even in the devouter Middle Ages when the belief in an actual Christ was vivid and strong. At this time the crimes of Pontiffs, which were ultimately the divine means of making the distinction felt as deep and eternal, only helped to destroy faith in the Invisible Ruler and Judge. Each priest in his own degree had been thrust into the same dangerous position as the High Priest. The Brahmin had always been liable to be confounded with Brahma. How fearful then the temptations of the man who was probably exalted above priests, who within his sphere was more potent than any prophet! He wished assuredly to denounce those whose sin had been that they made themselves Gods. He wished that his disciples should cease from men whose breath was in their nostrils. But would they cease from *him*? Could he prevent himself from being an object of their worship? Could he prevent himself from claiming an authority which was grounded on infallibility? All the rash

Jewish precedents.

Difficulty of the idea in the fifteenth century.

Savonarola's temptations.

His transgressions.

and violent deeds which are imputed to Savonarola during the years when he was ruling the destinies of Florence, his prohibition of amusements, his burning of profane books and works of art, his employment of children as censors of the manners ot their elders, are not, it seems to us, the least strange in a Dominican preacher suddenly feeling himself called upon and enabled to check the corruptions of a very corrupt city, and to put down whatever was likely in his judgment to foster them. When one thinks what any man would be in such a position, with all the temptations of orator, lawgiver, confessor, monarch in one, pursued by factions of unscrupulous enemies, edged on by a more dangerous faction of friends, the wonder is rather that his government cannot be chargeable with greater iniquities, that it should be so free from every imputation of self-seeking,* that the unexceptionable testimony of philosophers and statesmen who could not have loved it should yet be in favour of its general equity. Nevertheless, the deviations from that equity should be carefully and rigorously noted, not in a spirit of cavilling, but of earnest affection and truth, because they are warnings to reformers in after ages, because they explain the heavy judgments which were to befall the man who had pronounced judgments, and often most just judgments, upon his fellows.

Savonarola and Alexander VI.

38. The city of Florence was separated from other cities inasmuch as Christ was declared to be its King. That being a peculiarity, an exceptional condition, what was Christendom? Under whose government was that? A question surely to be asked. Now and then it must have occurred to Alexander VI. that he, more than other men, was to find the answer. To stop the mouth of the troublesome proclaimer of an obsolete faith was a natural resource. Many eagerly suggested it to the Pontiff. But the instinct of a Borgia led him to regard direct methods as both disagreeable and dangerous. Compliments, gentle remonstrances, offers of a bishopric and a cardinal's hat,† must be tried first. If these failed, there were other well known resources for crushing an impracticable enemy. All the measures of the Pope with reference to Savonarola, showed how wise he was in his generation. It was a most natural and reasonable demand that San Marco should not keep itself aloof from the other convents of its order. But the acceptance of that one proposition would remove, as the Papal court knew, the fulcrum on which

Isolation of San Marco.

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* The accusation respecting the Mediceau library, which Mr. Roscoe has founded upon a passage in Tiraboschi, is triumphantly confuted by *Perrens* (pp. 185, 186), who is no enthusiastical admirer—often a severe judge—of Savonarola. His *Vie de Savonorole*, which received a prize in the French Academy, is interesting as well as impartial.

† Perrens is fully convinced that these offers were made in 1494 at the instance of a Dominican Bishop.—Pp. 86, 87.

the power of the monk rested. If that ceased to be the model and the sign to the Dominican Order, Florence would sink into merely one of the factious cities of Italy; Savonarola must cease to be a guide of the people in the name of God; he must become merely a leader of the Piagnoni. Everything really turned upon this pivot. The Pope had only to insist on this one point of obedience, and Savonarola must abandon his work as a reformer, or be contumacious. Happily, through the necessity of his nature, Alexander VI. mixed himself in the intrigues for restoring the Medicean family, so that he could not thoroughly profit by the advantage of his position. He could not be simple even where his policy required him to be so. Still it was evident that Savonarola would not ultimately escape from this dilemma.

Difficulty of Savonarola's position.

He could appeal to the old doctrine that any convent might become *more* strict to its rule than its neighbours, but that none might reduce itself from a higher to a lower level. If the Pope continued to require union and San Marco to rest in isolation, such a maxim could not save it from the charge of renouncing the spiritual authority which Dominicans, of all religious men, were most pledged to maintain. Here, then, a strife began which was certain to involve rebellion; Savonarola would be prohibited from preaching; a sentence of excommunication would be suspended over him; he must determine whether he would defy it, or whether he who believed himself to be a witness appointed by God would close his lips at the command of a man.

Savonarola committed to a practical denial of the Pope's infallibility.

39. There was the usual hesitation and reluctance which there must be in every good and wise man, before he takes a step which commits him with all the traditions of his childhood, with the opinions, if not the convictions, of the surrounding world. But the step was taken. The preacher would not be silenced. The Pope was pronounced infallible only as Pope, in the same sense as a Christian is perfectly righteous in so far as he is a Christian. That is to say, the great champion of the Dominican Order, the man who most represented its faith, its feelings, its prejudices; the man who had grown up under the shadow of the ecclesiastical teaching, and was least withdrawn from it by the modern literature and philosophy,—not trained in any Gallican school, not infected with any imperial prejudices—*because* he was a Churchman and a Dominican, undermined the very foundation of the Roman autocracy, and claimed for himself an ordination not derived from it or subject to it. Had this been all, the story of Savonarola would have been remarkable enough; remarkable as an indication of the course by which Italians probably in one age as much as in another will be led to spiritual freedom—viz., by the discovery that God is the Author

The disgrace of the Orders.

How Savonarola had defied his enemies.

How they triumphed over him.

and the only hope of civil freedom. But other and sadder events which occurred at the close of this history, were to prove that though members of an Order might be the appointed agents in overthrowing the power which they had done so much to defend, the Orders, as such, were to be humbled as much as the Pope could be humbled. For nearly three centuries Dominicans and Franciscans had shown what mendicancy might do for theology, for general learning, for the cause of the people, for the excitement of the very questions which they seemed commissioned to silence. For the greater part of that time their rivalries with each other, as well as the disputes and contentions within their own bodies, had worked together with superstitions, falsehoods, persecutions, burnings, to show how much mischief they could inflict upon the Church and upon mankind. Now was come their trial day. Now, all their mean spite against each other, their desire for pre-eminence, their miraculous assumptions, were to make them a mockery in the eyes of a generation which they had themselves educated, and which had become sceptical and scoffing in spite of them or by their means. That their exposure should have involved that of perhaps the bravest, truest man either of them had ever possessed, may add to the historian's pain in speaking of it; but only makes it more startling and complete. Often had Savonarola said in the vehemence of his oratory, that God would confirm his words and his mission by a miracle, that he might venture into the fire and would come out of it unhurt. A Franciscan was found to insist that he should pass through this ordeal; to declare that be himself was willing to go through it as a confuter of the false prophet. The Dominicans did not dare to shrink from the test: one member of the convent of San Marco was even ready to undergo it on behalf of his master. Savonarola's vision became dim; he could not tell what the issue would be; he only hoped that God would bear them up if they willingly cast themselves down. He was glad—both sides were glad—to avail themselves of sacred, which, in fact, were most profane, excuses for escaping the test which they had devised for themselves. Florence was to know,—all Europe was to know, that the miracle had come to nothing; that those who deal in enchantments are only safe when they work in secret; that when they come to the light it will confound them.

His imprisonment.

40. A lesson very necessary for mankind,—not less necessary for Savonarola himself. With it vanished his popularity and his power. Samson was in the hands of his enemies. The faction which hated him in his own city was now triumphant; it was ready, amidst the applauses of the people who had hung upon his lips, to execute the papal sentence against him. A

traitor gave him up, for he had betrayed himself. The deep disgrace he had incurred was the best preparation for the imprisonment and death which were awaiting him. He had been brought low, and he knew that it was by another hand than that of the Pope or the *Arrabiati.* He had no confidence in his own fortitude. He told his judges that he was certain if he was put to the torture he should say whatever they wished him to say; but that the words would be lies, which he adjured all men in the name of God not to believe. He was right. The torture proved that it was the proper instrument of the father of lies. It did lead a true man to unsay that for which the moment he was off the rack he would die rather than disavow. And God, who had thus shown him his nothingness, granted him at last the fire which he had in his ignorance sought for himself. In *that* fire he was not left alone. The voice of the papal emissary was heard proclaiming that he was cut off from the Church militant and triumphant. Another voice was heard saying, "No, not from the Church triumphant; they cannot shut me out of that."

His torture.

His death.

Florence a world centre.

41. In this chapter we have confined ourselves almost entirely to one place. Ficinus, Pico, Savonarola in their different ways explain to us the Medicean influence upon the Medicean city, and so we think help to illustrate the whole movement of the fifteenth century, especially the philosophical movement with which we are mainly concerned, more than a general survey of the different nations and of the men who flourished in them would have done. To find some centre for the thoughts of the time, some local centre, is, generally speaking, the best way of investigating them. A student who will give himself to the history of Florence, will not be able to dispense with the study of the history of England, of Germany, of Bohemia, but he will have a light which may reveal what was working secretly in all these countries—a light which the mere events that occurred in them would not afford him. What those great schools were to do for England, which were arising at the very time when her fields were drunk with the blood of her nobles and citizens; how those schools, founded by her ecclesiastics and her sovereigns, would conspire with impulses in favour of reformation, which were swaying the middle classes of the community, not now aided by the monarchs but fiercely persecuted by them; how Gutenberg and his presses would change that Germany, which seemed torn by the cabals of its princes, which the successor of the Roman emperors was vainly trying to bring again into unity; how the fierce protest of Ziska on behalf of lay rights and against learning should have arisen just when Nicolas V. was restoring learning together with the influence of the Church: these

The old world.

are problems which Florence, contemplated in the scholar, the nobleman, and the preacher of whom we have spoken, may assist us in solving. A citizen of Genoa may carry us into still wider views of the future destiny of the world, and yet may lead us back to some of the lessons which we have been gathering in the Academy of Lorenzo. What was the new world to be which was just revealing itself out of the bosom of the deep? A glorious Atlantis, or a source of fresh debasement and corruption to its discoverer and conqueror? Was Europe to go back to the East for its wisdom, or on to this region in the farthest West? Were priests, or sages, or monarchs, or people to rule in that West? Was it to find most guidance from prophets, or from statists and diplomatists? Would it some day ask about the Being and the One concerning which Ficinus and Pico spoke? Would there be needed for its cities and prairies such a Sovereign as was proclaimed by Savonarola from the convent of San Marco?

The new world.

CHAPTER IV.

FIRST HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Nicolo Machiavelli, born A.D. 1469, died A.D. 1529.

1. THE overthrow of Savonarola in Florence was signalized by many confiscations. The more conspicuous of the Piagnoni had large fines to pay. A small fine of two hundred florins was imposed upon a young, scarcely known, member of the party, whose name was Nicolo Machiavelli. Those two hundred florins imported much to the life of that young man: they should be remembered by every historian of the sixteenth century.

Early experience.

2. Nicolo Machiavelli had seen an attempt to establish the kingdom of Jesus Christ in an Italian city. He had admired the power and genius of the man who was the chief mover in that experiment. Immeasurably stronger he had found him than his opponents, philosophical or ecclesiastical. Evidently he had a secret of government which they did not possess. He could speak to something in the people to which they could not speak, or which made them no answer. It was worth while to follow such a man, at least to see whither he would go. An enterprising youth with a turn for philosophical experiments, would run some risks for the sake of watching an unwonted phenomenon, and mastering the sense of it. Machiavelli did not stop short till the trial had been to all appearance fairly made, till he could not doubt that it had failed. Then other methods must be tried; Florence must, if possible, be saved from foreigners, from the princes of Italy, from itself. The young diplomatist will try if he can stay the hand of Cæsar Borgia; if he can outwit the great outwitter. To accomplish that end he must study Borgia as he had studied Savonarola; he must discover *his* secret. It is impossible to doubt that he became enamoured of the pursuit; a thorough villain became admirable in his eyes for his consistency and for his success. "My own ends are honourable; *I* wish the good of Florence; why may I not (simply as an experimentalist) investigate this peculiar and perfect form of human wickedness?" A study continued in that spirit possibly for some time—patriotism, reverence for good, even a willingness to suffer for the apparent good, not deserting the amateur in devilish policy. But the despair of

1502, at the court of Louis XII.

1503, with Cæsar Borgia.

truth which grows upon one who has seen truth always baffled is very terrible. The respect for falsehood which creeps over a soul that is resolved to revenge itself for its disappointment is more terrible still! What a coherency and harmony, such as they never assume in the actual world, lies can assume, when a man who was created to hate them becomes their historian and panegyrist! And what a penalty must he pay for the contradiction! Machiavelli sees nothing for him at last but to become the tool of the Medicean family. No one can keep a conscience; why not sell his at the best price that can be had? Why not reduce the maxims which he has seen at work into order; why not teach those who wish to be the devil's servants, what are his commandments and how they may be thoroughly fulfilled?

The Medici return to Florence, A.D. 1512. Machiavelli imprisoned, A.D. 1512. Writes the *Principe*, A.D. 1513.

3. Here, then, begins the great political philosophy of the sixteenth century. How much so acute a student of the past history of the world as Machiavelli, so accurate an observer of events in which he mingled, could contribute to the moral teaching of mankind, all will acknowledge. But it was not the history of Florence or the discourses on Livy which determined the character of the age. They might be read by its thinkers.—The celebrated eighteenth chapter of "the Prince," "*In what way Princes ought to keep faith,*" became the manual and horn-book of the actors. The doctrine of it was clear and comprehensible. It could be easily received into the memory. It could be laid up in the heart. "*Achilles was committed to a Centaur:*" that means that a prince must learn to deal with the beastly part of man as well as the human. *The fox can do more than the lion: Alexander VI. did nothing but lie; yet no one succeeded so well. Be a good hypocrite, you will never want dupes. Seem mild, courteous, religious, sincere. Be so, now and then, if you can.* These lessons might have seemed like a reduction of existing practices to the absurd, or the impossible. Princes, civil and ecclesiastical—those whose names are most familiar to us, those whom historians, Scotch and English, have delighted to honour—did not think so at all. They perceived nothing extravagant or ridiculous in such a theory of the Universe. They tried, so far as in them lay, to realize it. Many sages looked on then and afterwards in profound admiration, crying, "These are the men who have discovered the art of governing. There is the wisdom which we in our various speculations have been looking for; at last, it is revealed!" The question is rather, what head, crowned or uncrowned, did *not* accept this wisdom as that to which all others must bow; whether any, crowned or uncrowned, were acquainted with a wisdom strong enough to overcome it? Perhaps this is the question of the

The *Principe* becomes a manual.

The duty of not keeping faith.

Faithfully observed by French, Spanish, and Italian rulers.

first half of the sixteenth century; its philosophy may mean the attempt to find an answer.

Henry VII., whether a mere politician in this sense.

4. The sovereign who reigned in England at the commencement of the sixteenth century, as he is one of Bacon's three Magians, worthy to be associated with Louis XI. and Ferdinand the Catholic, may be supposed to have anticipated the lessons of the Florentine in practice, and to have been prepared for the theory if ever it was fairly presented to him. Such an opinion is plausible, but, we think, not well founded. Henry VII. may not have been scrupulous in the means by which he compassed his ends. In his desire to make the kingly power a reality—to be something more than the first baron of his realm—he may have been too ready to avail himself of the services of mere officials. He may have preferred the clergy as being handy, not over conscientious, and childless; he may have felt no reluctance to pay the jobs they did for him by persecuting heretics for them. Still his aims were not ignoble. He was not aggrandizing a house, but organizing a kingdom. He was bringing order out of chaos. He was accomplishing that work as it only could be accomplished, by asserting the authority of the hereditary national monarch. Acts of petty policy and covetousness detracted from his character and from his usefulness. But they did not hinder him from being the founder and exemplar of a family which did more for England than all that preceded or that followed it; which restored to her her island power and distinctness; which asserted a righteousness that men did not create and cannot abolish. Nor was this tendency to political craft at all apparent in the young prince, who substituted chivalrous and magnificent tastes for his father's avarice. Evil propensities might be latent in him. They might lead to crimes. But one, who prophesied, at the commencement of Henry's reign, that at no period of it would he resemble the Italians described in "the Prince"—that at no period of it would their maxims become his maxims, might have boldly asked at the end of that reign,—whether his words had not been confirmed by the event? The determination to assert his will, a determination for which we owe thanksgiving to another will than his, might betray him into unrighteous deeds; it was one great protection from that false and crooked policy in which his most famous contemporaries gloried.

His ends.

Henry VIII.; to be seen as Machiavelli.

Sir Thomas More, born A.D. 1480, died 1535.

5. Our business, however, is only by accident with crowned heads. We turn with pleasure to an uncrowned one, whose history can never be read apart from that of his master. Sir Thomas More was one of those who testified at the outset of the sixteenth century, that England did not mean to accept the maxims of "the Prince." That celebrated discourse which *Raphael*

Utopia published first at Louvain, A.D. 1516.

Discourse of Raphael at the Archbishop's table.

The English lawyer.

Hythlodæus delivered concerning the best condition of a Republic in the Second Book of the *Utopia*, has unfortunately been more spoken of and remembered than the First Book, which is far more truly More's, which refers directly to England, which is altogether practical and altogether noble. One might have expected an English lawyer to see a great many faults in the general order of the commonwealth. But who would have dreamed that the first weak spot which he touched would be our criminal justice? The accomplished philosopher who had travelled with Americus Vespusius, and seen the blessed island,—arguing not from its customs but from common sense,—denounces the punishment of death for offences against property, and shows how England is begetting and nourishing the thieves whom she hangs; is unmerciful in his comments upon those who live merely to consume the fruits of the earth; points out the evils of war, of monopolies, of the monastic mendicancy; and all this at the table of Morton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who defends his guest against the comments of his countrymen, and is especially amused at the vehemence of a Dominican in resenting some too wise remarks of the jester (a necessary addition to the entertainments of Churchmen as well as of Princes), at the expense of his order. That is by the way; but the real sharpness of More's wit is reserved for his *own* order. The jurisconsult who is commencing a long, carefully arranged defence of the wisdom of our ancestors, is courteously told that perhaps he had better reserve his oration for another time, or for the courts. And afterwards (exquisite picture, for which how many might have sat in any year between More's times and our own), the jurisconsult declares respecting some proposed improvement, that nothing of the kind will ever do in England; it will bring the State into the greatest peril; and thereafter throws up his head, twists his lips, and is silent.

The philosopher despairing of any influence over rulers.

What he would have to say to them.

6. Certainly there was nothing Machiavellian in the man who could strike so manfully at the weaknesses of the profession which he was most interested in upholding. And yet there is one passage which should be read as a pendant to "the Prince" because it explains how a true and honest man might be driven to a despair not unlike Machiavelli's when he contrasted the doings of the rulers of Europe—not with a high ideal of excellence, simply with the plainest rules of common morality. We allude to the very eloquent and beautiful statement of Raphael's reasons for not taking any part in the councils of Princes. What would the king of France say to him if he told him that he had no business with Milan or Naples? that treaties were not made only to be broken with Venice? that Swiss were not to be hired as robbers and murderers? Would he have a better chance in Spain, in Germany,

Sure to be coughed down.

or even in England? Would he be more tolerated by ministers than by sovereigns if he said that money was not to be depreciated in value at one moment and to be raised at another; that it did not behove him to keep his people in famine and misery that he might diminish the chance of insurrection; that it was better to be poor himself than to rule a nation of paupers? Such notions will, of course, be hunted out of courts; therefore it is better for philosophers to stay away from courts.

The Utopia not More's island.

More's character.

7. This was not More's doctrine, nor was it his practice. He believed that philosophers should do what they could, if they could not do all. He had a respect for Utopia, but he was no Utopian. The Communism, which was the acknowledged foundation of this Commonwealth, had a certain charm for him; but he spoke what he meant when he said that he should grieve to see any approximation to it in his own land. It might remove some evils; it would destroy many virtues. He was, in fact, a fine, perhaps the finest, specimen of the English philosophical Conservative; with enough reverence for the ideal to elevate the tone of his mind, to keep his conduct high and pure, to make him indifferent about royal favours, and ready for the sake of a conviction to cast them aside; with a reverence for the actual, which no dreams of possible alterations could the least disturb. Able to despise meanness in priest or jurist, and to denounce it when he wrote Latin; unwilling that servants or Thames watermen should suspect wrong in either class—should ever hear or be told the jests, which were seemly and agreeable when they passed between scholars talking quietly in their libraries at Chelsea, or their boats on the river. He could utter sentiments that Munster Anabaptists might have quoted in their justification. He would not suffer Tyndale to sell an English Bible. The best of husbands, fathers, friends, the honestest of lawyers, the most agreeable, and so far as risks to himself were concerned, the most brave of men; no one was a better witness against the craft of his times; no one laboured more strenuously to counteract the only influence which could prevent it from being omnipotent.

Erasmus, born A.D. 1467, died 1536. Encomium Moriæ, 1510.

8. Far more dangerous to monks and priests generally was that eminent friend of More—himself a priest and a monk—who knew Latin as well as any old dweller in Latium, who had received all the teachers from Constantinople could impart. And his lore, whether Greek or Latin, was no heavy armour, such as men had used in the old tournaments. It never eucumbered the wearer; it permitted all graceful movements; it was equally fit for offence or defence. Erasmus loved wisdom; but he still more hated folly; and the keen, quick eye which might have been employed in detecting the subtlest metaphysical dis-

tinctions, which did occupy itself with philological distinctions, was more pleasantly and efficiently employed in exposing absurdities, in showing to what an extent they had become supreme in the world and in the Church. A vast store of materials lay ready for such a wit as his to exercise itself upon. The time had come when it had an audience ready to welcome it. He who had himself been driven into the priesthood, he who looked back upon a cruel domestic tragedy connected with priestly celibacy, had motives enough to quicken and embitter his scorn; had an inward assurance that he was serving the cause of morality when he was indulging his intellectual instincts —that the most ridiculous things in the social life of his time were also some of the most abominable. .

His wit not to be denounced.

9. The complaints which some have made of this beautiful faculty in Erasmus, as if it were too fine, or as if it ought to have been directed to other objects than it was, seem to us quite uncalled for. No skill which he showed in unveiling falsehood was surely excessive or ill-employed. All that one wishes is, that he had hated more that which he perceived to be inhuman and godless, that he had loved more the truth which it contradicted. One does not regret that he recognized the ugliness of the impostures of ignorant friars; one is only sorry that those impostures looked so very different to him when they were disguised by the refinements of accomplished Popes. One likes to hear him denounce those who thought they were pleasing God by lying for Him; one would have been glad if he had shown any very strong conviction that there was a God of truth who would avenge such services on His behalf, especially when they were performed by those who looked behind the machinery and pulled the wires. Erasmus was not more of a Machiavellian in his heart than his friend More; but he had a sort of gloomy conviction that folly and evil were the natural, even the legitimate tyrants over mankind at large; only wits, and scholars, and humorists could throw off their yoke. They might resent the quackeries of vulgar deceivers; they could abate, in some degree, that nuisance. Was it wise or safe to encourage the tradesmen of the town—barbarians themselves—in their prejudices against the higher clergy, often the great promoters of letters? What might become of learning if there were not benefices for scholars, and munificent prelates to bestow them? To be sure poor Erasmus knew little of these rewards of learning. He had often to beg for them somewhat ignominiously; to bear contempt from contemptible men. Still he could not bear to think of the time when there should not be an atmosphere of patronage about the students of manuscripts and the writers of books; of a time when the pure Latin which he had rescued from the schoolmen

His failures.

His poverty.

should yield to the vulgar tongue he had almost forgotten. Julius II., the warrior-pope, is no doubt a great scandal to us who desire peace on earth (peace at least, *hominibus bonæ voluntatis*, that is, men of a classical taste), along with a certain amount of glory to God in the highest. But if a son of Lorenzo be the successor, what may we not expect? Why should not he be the restorer of the fallen age, the beginner of a new age? Why not indeed? Perhaps it was to be so, whether in the sense that Erasmus meant or some other.

The golden age of Leo X.

Erasmus, not a philosopher, but a destroyer of philosophies.

10. According to formal rules, Erasmus has no place in a sketch of moral and metaphysical inquiries. It is not as a philosopher that we speak of him; rather as a man who exercised a very great influence in undermining the system which had claimed the name of Philosophical in the previous centuries. The new Platonism was the antagonist of the old scholasticism in the fifteenth century; Humanism was its antagonist in the early part of the sixteenth century. Erasmus, and the class of men of which he was the most conspicuous leader, cared about equally for Plato and Aristotle as Grecians—no doubt had discernment to prefer the imagination and wit of the former—thought little of either as the representative of a certain habit or method of thought. Though, of course, far more qualified than the doctors of the thirteenth or fourteenth century to understand what each sage had written, they were even more apt to be misled in their judgments by the elder Romans. The ideas of Cicero respecting academics and peripatetics being delivered in his exquisite style and with his practical Roman sense, were naturally welcomed as far more agreeable and far more trustworthy than the guesses and commentaries of Albert and Aquinas. Who that could hear the great subjects which had occupied the Greeks discussed at Tusculum, between men of business and refinement relaxing from the toils of the Forum, would bear to derive their notion of them from those whose lives were passed in a monastery? How delightful to get rid of everything about quiddities and categories, that we may talk about the powers and duration of the soul! about the relation of the Useful and the Honourable! about the realms of speculation and of practice! A philosophy for ladies and gentlemen, for the boudoir and the dining-room, was gradually maturing itself under this Humanist influence: something not too deep or earnest for the leisurely statesman or the literary priest; something which should not make too severe demands upon the thought or the conscience; which should have a soothing, and, on the whole, a beneficent effect upon both.

Old Roman notions of Greek philosophy becoming prevalent.

Humanist tendencies.

Humanist divinity.

11. Since we have said that all the questions of philosophy in these later ages, if not also in the earlier, turn upon *the* question, How the Human is related to the Divine, or if it is related

at all, we naturally ask about the Humanism of Erasmus; Did it assert, or imply, or ignore Divinity? How, in this respect, did he resemble the teachers who had preceded him? How did he act upon those who followed him? Theology, we have seen, was just as much the basis of all thought with Ficinus and Picus as with the most orthodox of the school doctors. Nay, it is evident from the dedication to the Plotinus, that the modern Aristotelians were regarded by Ficinus as underminers of divine lore, and that on this ground especially he sought for a philosophy that should supersede theirs. Evidently Erasmus had no complaint of this kind to make against the followers of the schoolmen in his time. He disliked them for their barbarisms, for their dreary logic, not because they were deficient in aspirations after the Infinite. With the Infinite Erasmus would busy himself as little as might be. He would like, as far as in him lay, to bring the facts and moral precepts of the Gospels into relief; the mysteries which churchmen discovered in them might be assumed and left in the background. The human he would disentangle from the dry systematic foldings in which it had been wrapped up, also to a great extent from that which was legendary and mythic. What foundation it had when these had disappeared he did not particularly care to inquire. If others thought they had a call to engage in that investigation, he willingly left it to them. It happened, however, that he was forced into the consideration of this subject by the events of his time, and acquired a place in the history of human inquiries, to which his mere literature would not have entitled him. But his controversy respecting 'Free Will' belongs to a period at which we have not yet arrived.

Erasmus no student of the Infinite.

Johann Reuchlin (called Capricio), born A.D. 1455, died 1522.

12. The right of another eminent Humanist to such a recognition from the student of philosophy is indisputable. *John Reuchlin* deserves the title as much as Erasmus; but the common name may be as misleading as that of Nominalist, when applied to Occam and Gerson, as that of Mystic when applied to Eckhart and Tauler. Germany owes to Reuchlin more of humane culture than it or than Europe generally owes to Erasmus. He did as much to weaken the influence of the schoolmen, as much for the restoration of a pure Latinity. When Argyrophilus heard him at Rome discussing Greek authors, he exclaimed, "Why, our poor ruined country has flown across the Alps, and has planted itself amidst the German forests!" Almost all the university towns of his country received some tokens of his erudition. After he had learnt at Paris and taught at Basle—Tubingen, Stuttgard, Heidelberg, Wittemberg, all benefited by the manuscripts he had brought with him from Italy—still more by the knowledge he had acquired there, and

His services to Germany.

in whatever parts of the world he had dwelt. But there was one pursuit which distinguished him from those who were in other respects his fellow-workers. It was, strictly speaking, the pursuit of his life. By it he influenced the movements of the Reformation, in a way that Erasmus could not influence them, or but slightly. To that pursuit he was indebted for some of his principal vexations; and for all that was marked and characteristic in his philosophy.

His Hebrew studies.

13. The pursuit of Hebrew roots was not one in which, *à priori*, one would not have expected a man like Reuchlin to engage. He had this great advantage over Erasmus, that he was not an ecclesiastic, but a man of affairs—occupied, always honourably occupied, with the business of some of the German Courts, especially during the life of Eberhard the first Duke of Wurtemberg. He was a jurist, one of the council of the empire. He was a married man, leading a pure domestic life, like our own More. In an age when there was much enthusiasm about the new learning, one might not greatly wonder that a man having these occupations should be glad to know something of the lore which the exiles from Constantinople had to impart, or that he should be glad to exchange the theological Latin for that of Ulpian, or of Cicero. But what interest could Reuchlin have in penetrating into the secrets of that purely sacred language which belonged, it would seem, so exclusively to the divine? If his mind was attracted by the elegance of the new culture, he might well shrink from converse with Rabbins; and though he believed that the fountains of jurisprudence were in the Old Testament, a civilian of the sixteenth century surely might have been satisfied with the light upon the Mosaic institutions which he could obtain from Greek or Latin versions.

His state occupations.

Reuchlin at Basle.

14. It was at Basle that Reuchlin received his first impulse in this direction from Wesel, a pupil of Thomas à Kempis, who had inherited from that teacher a great dislike of the scholastic philosophy, and was called *Magister Contradictionum* by the surrounding doctors, from the number of puzzling objections which he raised against some of their admitted maxims. This man, whose influence upon the after Swiss Reformation was not inconsiderable, encouraged Reuchlin to grapple with the Hebrew Scriptures. But it was our old friend, Pico of Mirandula, who, to his injury, as some Germans say, set him upon studying the Hebrew Cabbala. Some of the mysteries which Plato and Plotinus only hinted at, might, Pico thought, be discovered there. This hint from an Italian whom he honoured greatly, must have met with something congenial to it in Reuchlin's mind, or it would not have penetrated so

Influence of Pico.

deeply. Its fruits would have been few or immature if Reuchlin had not fallen in first with one, then with another Jew, especially with a physician of Frederick III., who enabled him to prosecute his inquiries in a method which neither Wesel nor Pico could have taught him. If we overcome our first surprise that a layman should have entered on such investigations at all, we soon find what an advantage it was to him that he was free from clerical shackles. An Origen or a Jerome in former days, perhaps a Ousa in the last century, would not have scrupled to make any use of a Jew which he could afterwards turn to a Christian account. He would rather have rejoiced to think that he was following a Jewish precedent in spoiling the Egyptians. But the ecclesiastical mind, or at least the monkish mind, had in this day become far more sensitive. There were snares and pitfalls all about. Greek heresy was creeping in; who could tell how quickly it might overspread the Latin world through these newly imported Pagan authors; through these Testaments written in such strange characters, which were superseding the Catholic and Divine Vulgate? Was not *this* impure contact enough? Must we seek aid from Jews, also, from the bitterest and most outrageous enemies of our faith, whom we have been trying by all means for ten centuries to exterminate? Trade with them we may; borrow from them we must. But to think of learning from them! What profane poison may they not infuse into our minds, calling it sacred and inspired!

Intercourse with Jews.

Dread of Greek and Hebrew lore.

Reuchlin's opinions of the Jews.

15. From these fears, so far as they influenced his own conduct, Reuchlin was perfectly free. He knew that he had no Judaical propensities. In 1505 he wrote a book upon the "Causes of the Calamities of the Jews," tracing them, much as any divine would have done, to their original crime and their continued unbelief, appearing to regard their sufferings as inevitable, pronouncing only a very mild sentence upon those who had inflicted them, though evidently inclined to think that other methods might now be more wise and more hopeful. Such a treatise, possibly, afforded the Dominican monks of Cologne a hope that Reuchlin would assist them in an enterprise to which they were stirred up by one Pfefferkorn, a convert from Judaism, who was determined to earn a fame, which his sincerity or his learning would never have procured him, by his fury against the people whom he had forsaken. He persuaded the monks that if they could only procure an edict from the Kaiser to seize and burn all Jewish books whatsoever, their prejudices against the Gospel would die out, and their conversion would proceed with great rapidity. Maximilian, with characteristic indifference, granted the order. Pfefferkorn applied to Reuchlin to assist him in executing it. He excused himself on the plea of busi-

Pfefferkorn and the monks of Cologne.

ness, and some flaws in the imperial instrument. Pfefferkorn and the monks applied for an extension as well as a correction of the edict. It ought, they said, to include even Hebrew Bibles, these being interpolated to serve anti-christian purposes. Before so sweeping and monstrous a sentence went forth, Reuchlin, learned alike in German law and in Jewish writings, must be consulted. He gave his answer in a very elaborate paper, wherein he divided Jewish writings into seven classes, and pointed out how much the cause of learning and truth might suffer from the suppression of any one of them. If mischief could be proved to exist in the books, Reuchlin would have them burnt; but the fact must be established in the courts against a Jew, just as it would be against a Christian. Such a notion of justice was perilous; the learning of the discourse more perilous still. Pfefferkorn and the monks raise the cry that Reuchlin is an abettor of the wickedness of Jews. There must be an examination into his books as well as theirs. The accomplished scholar, now becoming an old man, recollects what an inquisition, carried on by Dominicans, has meant in former days, is likely to mean in his own. He trembles, apologizes, reminds the monks that he has pleaded their causes without fees, and that he is a lawyer, not a divine; offers to recant any opinions that he has uttered if they are heretical. The effect of his pusillanimity is what might have been expected. The monks have him at their feet, and they will trample upon him. He must withdraw his book, or suffer it to be burnt. Reuchlin's blood is stirred within him; he recovers his strength, denounces his enemies in language (Erasmus and others thought), somewhat too bitter. All the learned in Germany make common cause with him. The monks must refer their cause to the Pope, now a learned pope. While they are waiting his decision, which they fear may be an adverse one, Ulrich Hutten, or some other wit, or congregation of wits, sets Europe laughing at them by the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum.* Franz Sickingen, with other arms, invades the territory of Cologne, and enjoins the monks to refund the expenses to which they have put Reuchlin by their process, unless they wish to be at the mercy of his free troops. The question being practically decided in this simple and expeditious manner, the monks have not much hope from their appeal to Rome. Another German controversy which occupies the thoughts of Leo, causes it to be forgotten.

Reuchlin tries to save the Hebrew books.

His danger.

His infirmity.

The battle in Germany.

The Epistolæ.

What this strife indicated.

16. This debate between Reuchlin and the monks of Cologne is one upon which historians of the German Reformation dwell with an interest disproportioned to its apparent bulk, not to its real significance. It evidently denoted that the movement which was about to take place in Germany would not be merely,

not perhaps chiefly, an Hellenic movement, such as it had been in Italy. The Tabernacle would have at least as much to do with it as the Parthenon. This passage in Reuchlin's outward history explains also that which we have already intimated was the striking feature of his philosophy. We shall not ask our readers to go with us into his book on the Cabalistical Art that they may appreciate this philosophy. But we must trouble them with a short account of a dialogue *De Verbo Mirifico* which strikes us as very curious and valuable, quite as much for the illustration of the age as of the author. We are passing from a *logical* into a *philological* age. Words, as the instruments of the logician, have occupied us enough for three centuries. Hard work it has been to cut a way through the tangled wood of the controversy about names and things. Now that we are emerging into a more open country, words meet us again in a new shape, with greater, not less, pretensions than before. They start up as mighty powers for good or for evil. One cried out, who was to determine more than all his contemporaries what the age should become, "*Words have hands and feet.*" At such a moment it was that this quiet cautious lawyer, Capnio, as he was wont to call himself, wrote, in pleasant and graceful Latin, a dialogue not unlike the old Ciceronian Dialogue. It could not have been held at Tusculum, yet those who discoursed there on the nature of the gods or the ends of moral actions might have listened attentively and wonderingly to certain passages in it.

De Arte Cabalistica.

The philological age.

De Verbo Mirifico.

17. Reuchlin shall state the argument of the Dialogue himself. "Sidonius, who was reckoned in the school of Epicurus, but who, as it afterwards appeared, did not hold himself bound to swear by the opinions of any master, a seeker of wisdom in all directions, after travelling in this search through many regions, came at last to Phorzheim. There he encountered two other philosophers — Baruch, a Hebrew, and Capnio, a Christian. With them he debates, first, the doctrines of various schools, then concerning the essential knowledge of things human and divine, concerning opinion, faith, miracles, the virtues of words and figures, the secret meaning and operation of signs. In this wise the sacred names and consecrated characters of all nations which had any philosophical eminence, or the ceremonies of which were not disgraceful, pass under review. Different symbols having been carefully examined,—each interlocutor in the dialogue describing them and commenting upon them according to the temper of his own sect—Capnio, in the third book, extracts from the different emblems that one Name wherein is concentrated the virtue of all sacred things, that Name which is over all, blessed for ever."

Argument of the Dialogue.

The Dramatis Personæ.

18. Reuchlin's dialogue is quite as dramatic as most of those

The Phœnician.

which have followed in the wake of the great master in that species of composition. Sidonius is a very fair picture of the travelled fine gentleman who has seen all lands; is exceedingly polite to the customs and practices of all; has even tried what spiritual benefits might come to him from bathing in the Ganges and from moderate conformity to Brahminical rules; has a general disbelief in anything that is not physical; suspects that the distinction of right and wrong has merely originated in custom; cannot account for the different opinions of different tribes, if there is any immutable standard; thinks there are a number of very strange things in the world which may be called miracles for want of a better name; believes his own Phœnicia to be the mother of all arts, but has never found more philosophical men or more handsome women than in Suabia. The Jew, again, is an agreeable specimen of his race: strong in his reverence for its law and customs, but not, on the whole, intolerant; ready to confess the degradation into which his people have fallen, but maintaining that they have treasures superior to those of all nations; acquainted with the speculations of philosophers, but not believing that they have led to any result, inasmuch as they have been occupied with the moveable and the fluxional, about which there can be no science; convinced that what concerns the constant and the eternal can only be learnt from tradition, which tradition has belonged to the Jewish elders. The surprise of the Epicurean, or semi-epicurean, that knowledge is *least* possible about things that can be seen and handled and tasted, is vividly brought out, and the violent denunciation which is put into the mouth of the Jew against the whole philosophy of sensation as immoral and detestable embodies most of what can be said respecting it in the way of mere declamation. It is pleasant to find the Christian Capnio interfering to vindicate the truth which is latent in the doctrine of Sidonius; to show how much is implied in the distinction of the senses; what a Divine order there is in all the powers and exercises which connect the body of man with the external world; what an evident need there is of a Reason both to have devised such a wonderful economy and to perceive it; while, at the same time, he fully justifies Baruch's doctrine, that science is properly conversant with the substantial and eternal, and that this must be discovered to us by a revelation. This contrast introduces a rather happy comparison of Plato and Aristotle, to each of whom Reuchlin does justice, denoting the first as the divine, *i. e.*, as occupied with the permanent and unchangeable, the second as demoniac, *i. e.*, as occupied with secondary and intermediate causes and agencies. Faith, Capnio places above both wisdom and knowledge, "Seeing that it is that whereby

The Hebrew.

The fluxional and the permanent.

The order of the senses.

Science and Revelation.

Faith; its relation to Science.

the intellect, being raised to the highest point that it can reach, and acquiring its greatest purity and transparency, perceives the radiant condition of minds divine and super-celestial, and the refulgence of all things mortal and immortal, as in a mirror of eternity; whereby it acquires a certainty in its converse with things beneath, which no classification, examination, opinion, no active or speculative power of the intellect, no discourse of reason can give; whereby it acquires an efficiency which it cannot receive from these, both for contemplation and for work."

Religious customs and ceremonies imply a relation between man and God.

19. The idea that all the religious customs and ceremonies of different nations imply some relation and communion between the Divinity and man, is prominent in the discourse of Capnio. In spite of his reverence for Epicurus and Lucretius, Sidonius yields his assent to this doctrine; only protests strongly against Baruch, who would suppose that there was some special perception of this relation, some special capacity for this communion, in the family of Abraham. Both are somewhat puzzled by the assertion of the Christian, that the power over nature which is indicated by the word *miracle*, resides in men by reason of their relation to God, while, he says also, that all such power is to be ascribed exclusively to God. Sidonius asks for the clue to this startling contradiction. Baruch confesses his suspicion that most miracles in the world may be traced to roguery and the love of gain. So far as they are connected with magic, or with any supposed powers in man, the elders of his nation attached little worth to them. Capnio asks him whether they did not attach great worth to certain *words* which they believed to have issued from the mouth of God? With some hesitation, and after inspecting the room to see that no servants are present, Baruch enters upon this subject, discloses some of the Jewish Cabala, and points out some mistakes which he supposes the writers of the New Testament and the commentators upon it to have made in their application of Hebrew expressions.

Hebrew divinity.

The Christian solution.

20. Thus the way is opened for Capnio's final discourse. We do not pretend to have fathomed the whole meaning of it. We are not sure how far he supposed a mysterious power to reside in words as such, how far he was desirous to show that the Christian revelation of the *Word made flesh* was the true explanation of the Cabala, the translation of them to a higher ground, the real vision that was seen on the Mount, the reconciliation of the anticipations of heathen sages with the lessons of those prophets to whom the word of God came. Reuchlin inclined, perhaps, at different moments, to each of these conclusions. At one time he might dwell with a superstitious awe upon certain forms of

The author's uncertainty.

speech; at another all speech might seem to be pointing to a ground beneath itself. He might see a path which led him above and below all superstition; but it was a path dazzling from excess of light, from which he was sometimes glad to escape into a more misty region. This perplexity in his mind is more interesting to us than any well digested statement of his opinions could possibly be. His German biographers tell us that his mistake about the Cabala is easily explained,—he confounded the subjective with the objective. However much we may envy the power of reducing a man into a formula, we English should only betray our stupidity if we pretended to possess it. Reuchlin gives us hints of thoughts which carry us into the infinite. We are content to receive the hints with gratitude, to own him for a brother-seeker after the meaning of puzzles that beset us as they did beset him. We do not believe that he would have helped us more if he had been able to talk volumes about the objective and subjective. What he does say of the *Verbum Mirificum*, besides touching upon many questions which are demanding a solution in the nineteenth century, affords, it seems to us, a very striking illustration of that which was peculiar to the sixteenth. That contemporary of Reuchlin who discovered that words have hands and feet, was not, indeed, to occupy himself much with Cabala. But no one was to dwell more on the might of a word coming forth from God. No one was to speak so much of a word entering into the heart of man. No one was so often to raise that very doubt which Reuchlin's dialogue suggests,—to raise it and handle it as far as the practical wants of his age required; not to dispose of it; rather to bequeath it as a problem for future generations.

Interest of Reuchlin's inquiries.

Transition to Luther.

21. These two eminent Humanists, Erasmus and Reuchlin, left disciples who took part in the events of the coming time, which it would have been impossible for them to take. Zwingle of Zurich, much as he differed from the scholar of Rotterdam in distinctness of purpose and in moral courage, nevertheless bore evident marks of having come out of his unmystical school. There is no pleasanter picture in Reuchlin's life than that of his meeting with the young men at Stutgard and Tubingen, among which young men the most conspicuous was his kinsman Schwarzerdt, better known to us as Philip Melancthon. It was Reuchlin who said to this young man, in 1518, "Leave thy country and thy father's house, and go into a land which God will show thee" —when Frederick of Saxony invited him to become his Greek professor at Wittenberg. That emigration—all-important to Melancthon—not unimportant to Germany,—brought him at once under an influence very different from that of the Humanists. Martin Luther, for some time teacher of philosophy there,

Pupils of the Humanists.

Zwingle.

Melancthon.

Wittenberg.

to his great discomfort—now giving lectures on the Epistles of St. Paul—had not required Melancthon's praises to interest him in the cause of his master. He had expressed to Spalatin, several years before the advent of the new professor, his personal affection for "that innocent and very learned man, John Reuchlin," and his entire sympathy with him in his conflict with the "asinine" monks of Cologne. But as he shared these sentiments with his future antagonist, Dr. Eck, and probably with Leo and the Roman cardinals, not much can be inferred from them respecting his general character and tendencies. Two years after he had uttered them, we find him writing to the same correspondent (Oct. 1, 1516) respecting Erasmus. "That very erudite man" does not, he conceives, at all understand St. Paul. He supposes the righteousness of the law in his Epistles to mean conformity to the ceremonial law. He prefers the feeble interpretation of Jerome to the earnest and vital teaching of Augustine. Luther declares that his attachment to Augustine is not owing to the prejudice of his order. When he first became a monk he did not care for him at all. It is by reading him that he has known his worth. He beseeches Spalatin to communicate his objections to Erasmus; for as he believes and hopes that his authority will hereafter be very great in the church, he fears that it may promote that literal, *i. e.*, mere dead understanding of the Apostle which had characterized almost all commentators since Augustine. He does not like criticising such great men; but in the cause of theology and for the salvation of his brethren, he must do it. A short time after he says that he is becoming more and more discontented with Erasmus, though he should be sorry to say so, lest he should seem to take part with his enemies. He has a great respect for scholarship; but he cannot forget that the one-tongued Bishop of Hippo was essentially wiser than the many-tongued monk of Palestine.

Luther's opinion of Reuchlin, 1510.

Dr. M. Luther's briefe. De Wette, No. iii., and 5th August, 1514.

Ibid, No. vii.

Ibid, No. xxii., p. 39.

And of Erasmus—

Non quod professionis meæ studio ad B. Augustinum probandum trahar, qui apud me, antequam in libros ejus incidissem ne tantillum quidem favoris habuit.

1st March, 1517, De Wette, xxix., p. 53. Erasmum nostrum lego et indies decrescit mihi animus erga eum.

22. Luther was, no doubt, sincere in his assertion, that his reverence for Augustine was not a consequence of the dress which he wore. He had entered his monastery with a Plautus; if he became a theologian rather than a Humanist during his stay in it, not the cloister, but a conflict through which the wisdom of the cloister as little as the wisdom of the Humanists could bring him, was the cause of the change. Augustine would have been nothing to him if he had not fought a similar battle, if he had not been led by Cicero and Plato to One who said—*Venite ad me qui cumque laboratis et fessi estis et ego vobis requiem dabo.* Luther, however, did not pass through Augustine's philosophical training. He had never felt the deep gratitude to Plato which the African confessed more readily after his conversion than before it. We cannot therefore attribute it to any

The Augustine monk.

De Wette. No. viii.

Nihil, ita ardet animus quam histrionem illum qui tam vere Græcâ larvâ ecclesiam lusit multis revelare.

sympathy with Ficinus and the Italian school or to any horror of the school Latin, that he became in this stage of his life a vehement denouncer of Aristotle. "I am sending letters," he writes early in 1516, "full of blasphemies and maledictions against Aristotle, Porphyry, and the commentators on the sentences." "There is nothing he longs for more than to uncover that actor who, with his Greek mask, has been playing so long on the stage of the church." "It is his greatest cross that he is forced to see fine minds, intended for all good studies, spending their lives in these pursuits." In the following year he puts forth propositions, not to be as celebrated as the theses respecting indulgences, but for our purpose scarcely less deserving of notice, and not useless for the understanding of those. A few extracts will indicate their character and their significance.

See Walch, Luther's Works, B. xviii., 6, 7, 8, Latin original, Lösche, I, 805.

Grace and will.

Grace and nature.

Righteousness in the man and in the act.

Aristotle and theology.

23. "It is true that the man, having become an evil tree, can will and do nothing else than evil." . . . . . "It is false that the will can naturally regulate itself according to sound reason." . . . . . . "The will, without God's grace, can do nothing else than what is unreasonable and evil." "It does not, however, follow that the will is by nature evil, *i. e.*, is the nature of the evil one, as the Manicheans taught." "The will is not free to act if the good is presented to it." "It standeth not in the will of man to will and not to will whatever is presented to it." "This assertion is not contrary to that of St. Augustine, when he says, 'There is nothing so much in the might of the will as the will itself.'" "Friendship is no virtue of nature, but of prevenient grace." "There is nought in nature save a certain craving for God." "This very passion for God becomes evil and the fornication of the spirit." "It is not true that this passion becomes good through the virtue of hope. Hope cometh not out of desert, but out of a passion which taketh away desert." "On the side of man there goes nothing before grace save an unsuitableness, yea, a rebellion." "In one word, nature has neither a pure reason nor a good will." "We are not masters of our actions from beginning to end, but servants." (Against the philosophers.) "We do not become righteous when we do what is good; but when we have become righteous we do what is good." "The whole ethical doctrine of Aristotle is the deadliest foe of the divine grace." "It is an error to say that Aristotle's notion of the highest good is not contrary to the Christian doctrine." "It is an error to say that without Aristotle no man is a theologian. It is truer to say that no man is a theologian unless he is without Aristotle." "To say, as men commonly say, 'a theologian who is no logician is a rash heretic,' is rash and heretical." "It is a vain phantasy to speak of a logic of belief. No syllogistic form harmonizes with

divine things." "In one word, the whole of Aristotle placed against theology, is as darkness against light." "However, it is a doubtful point whether the Latins rightly understand Aristotle." "It would have been good for Christendom if Porphyry with his universals had never been born." "The best known definitions of Aristotle point to nothing, and no one becomes wise through them." "The grace of God is not torpid or dead, but a living, moving, active spirit." "The omnipotence of God itself cannot decree that a man should do any work of friendship or love, the grace of God not being present therein." "God cannot receive a man without the grace of God, which maketh righteous." "The work of God's law can be done (outwardly) without the grace of God." "The law of God cannot be fulfilled (in the man himself) without the grace of God." "The law and the will are two foes, which, without the grace of God, can never be brought into harmony."

What mere power, be it the highest, cannot do.

Cause of Luther's rage against Aristotle.

24. From these specimens the reader may judge of the document generally—may see how it illustrates the mind of Luther, and how it betokens an approaching crisis in the mind of Europe. The saving clause in these propositions, which intimates that Aristotle may possibly have been mistaken by his Latin commentators, shows that Luther's wrath was hotter against the theologians who had taken him for their guide, than against the guide himself. Luther's inclination was to draw a somewhat over sharp distinction between the righteousness which belongs to civil life and the righteousness of the Christian man. He might have been willing to tolerate Aristotle as a dictator respecting the former, provided his followers absolutely withdrew his claims to any cognizance over the other. But Luther must have perceived that such a compromise was quite impracticable, even if his objections had been confined to the Aristotelian ethics. They did, in fact, as these propositions show, cover the whole field of logic also. The syllogism was as little to be borne in the realm of faith as the notion that a succession of good acts can form a good habit, and so a good man. Luther's main desire undoubtedly was to lay the axe to the root of that doctrine—to establish our Lord's principle in place of it, "Make the tree good, that the fruit may be good. How can ye, being evil, do good things?" But he could only effect this change by assuming that the will of God acts directly upon the will of His creature. This action or operation, which he denotes by the word *Grace*, is opposed to the outward law, which prescribes conduct, even when that law proceeds from the mouth of God himself And this action, with the response in man to it, is, he affirms, entirely out of the region of formal logic. The process cannot be exhibited as the arriving at an inference

His ethical objections.

His denunciation of logic as an organ of faith.

from certain premises. The whole after history of Luther depends upon this original starting-point. The theological war with Aristotle is the necessary prelude to the war with the Pope. This assumption of a ground above that of the Humanists—of a method opposed to theirs—was the only possible commencement of such a reformation as that of the sixteenth century.

Denunciation of Aristotle necessary.

25. We make this remark without assenting to Luther's sweeping condemnation either of the Greek sage or of the Mediæval sages, who had, we conceive, an honour of their own which we are bound to render them, though he did not and could not. We shall find that they had the revenge, and more than the revenge to which they were entitled, in the later times of the Lutheran movement; that Melancthon did something to restore Aristotle to the throne from which his more impetuous colleague had hurled him. But we are by no means convinced that that reactionary movement, though perhaps inevitable, was in itself favourable to the cause of truth and human progress; at all events, we feel confident that a course less decisive than that indicated in these propositions would, at the opening of the struggle, have been utterly ineffectual. No doubt it will strike many that a contest for freedom never began under stranger auspices. Did not Luther deny all freedom to man? Did he not make the will the very seat of his bondage? Was it not his complaint against the sacerdotal theology of his day that it was Pelagian? No assertions are more indisputable than these. And it must not be pretended that the watchword of Luther, either now or hereafter, was freedom *of* conscience. He liked much better to talk of freedom *from* conscience; a phrase liable certainly to the greatest possible misinterpretation; but having, as we shall find, a very distinct and, we apprehend, a very sound meaning in his mind. But startling as such statements may sound in many modern ears, that doctrine of Luther respecting the will—fiercely, rashly, paradoxically, as it was often stated—lies, we conceive, at the root of all the good which he was able to effect for mankind—was that to which we owe all the emancipation from priestly tyrannies and impostures of which we boast. Luther appealed directly from men to God; he confessed God as a righteous Being, whose work upon man is to make him righteous, who is not content with that which looks righteous to those that judge according to the sight of the eye and the hearing of the ear, who begins with the source of acts, with the doers of the acts. Luther's assertion respecting the slavery of the will to outward things and to inward inclinations, was not a theological assertion; it was simply the acknowledgment of a fact which he saw and felt. He

Luther *apparently* an enemy of freedom.

He does not exalt conscience.

He regards God as the author of freedom.

could not doubt that there were these fetters upon the heart of man: he had experienced them in his own. His theology consisted in the proclamation that the highest will in the universe breaks these fetters—that He sets the will free from them. The belief that there was such an emancipation, and that the Being who had been regarded as the cause of the slavery was the remover of it; this belief, just so far as it went—just so far as it was not restrained by notions and maxims inconsistent with itself—was that which enabled the nations of Europe to shake off delusions, to become manly and godly.

Luther likely to become more Augustinian than Augustine.

26. It was, indeed, quite possible, at this crisis of Luther's life, that he might have become a mere Augustinian monk and professor, thundering for a time against Aristotle and the schoolmen, but more opposed to the Humanists than to either, because humanity itself seemed to him odious—because he only looked upon it as a foul mass, out of which a few grains of gold might be hereafter picked. The temptations to such a course of thought were greater in the sixteenth century than in the fifth—greater to one who had been bred like Luther, than to one who had been forced to wrestle at the outset of his life with Manichæism, like Augustine. In his darkest hours the African could still look upon the baptized as redeemed and saved, whatever might become even of children who had not received the heavenly washing. It was a baptized community which presented itself to the monk of Wittenberg, as utterly corrupt and debased. To start from the idea of evil, Augustine had learnt, was to fall into the worst form of heresy; no theories which he afterwards adopted against Pelagius could destroy that primary conviction. Everything which Luther saw and suffered suggested to him the thought—"Surely evil is the law—good is the anomaly. What has the church done in fifteen centuries but make that fact more apparent?" There are indications in Luther's early letters that these hopeless conclusions might have wholly mastered his mind. He answers some one who consulted him about publishing good books in the German tongue (originals or translations), that he knew no better book than *Tauler's Sermons*, which are written in simple, healthy German, but that "it was of grace alone that any books should please or do good, and was he ignorant that the healthier books are the less they please and do good, the sheep being so very few in this region of wolves?" Had this mood continued he would probably have grown a harder and haughtier supralapsarian every year of his life; but there would have been few to curse or to bless his memory. The following year, 1517, raised Luther from a monk and professor into the great sixteenth

De Wette, No. xxv., December, 1516.

century warrior; that year made convictions which might have passed into dry dogmatism living and mighty for mankind.

Sale of indulgences.

Luther indifferent to the mere accidents of the subject.

What its essence was.

27. For now the maxims of the Prince were to encounter their destined antagonist. Policy and Faith were to look each other in the face, and to try which was stronger. Leo did not need the instructions of his old enemy, his new teacher, to perfect him in the divine art which stood higher in his estimation than all the others which he patronized. He was already an adept; fit to be an example, as the head of Christendom should be, not only of the way in which faith might be broken between men, but how the faith on which that rests might be turned into a mockery. For everything at Rome to be venal was nothing new. That Rome should try to make everything venal in the world which it ruled was natural. Leo felt that the sale of indulgences was the simplest and most legitimate expression of both the Papal and the Medicean mind. So assuredly it was. There was something judicial, no doubt, in the choice of agents. No one would have made so merry as Leo with the vulgarities and brutalities of Tetzel. But none would have served Leo's purpose except such as Tetzel. The good providence of God was in nothing more manifest than in this, that the man who denounced Tetzel was not diverted, as most men of his time would have been, from the deep principle involved in the sale, by the blasphemies of the particular hawker even by the trading spirit of the employer. Too much possessed by a sense of the nature of sin and forgiveness to laugh at the extravagances of a Dominican stump orator—with too much reverence for the Pope to believe that he could mean to make merchandise of God's gifts—Luther lifted up his voice against the notion that an indulgence could be anything but a curse to its receiver which he should pay any price to escape from. *This* was the assertion, by their acceptance or refusal of which, men were to decide whether they looked upon the Church as the proclaimer of a moral or an immoral Ruler of the universe. Was He the Deliverer from sin, or the granter of indulgences? Has He sent His Son to redeem men from sin, because it is their destruction, or only to make it possible that certain penalties of law should be remitted? What His vicar ought or ought not to do must depend upon the answer to that primary question. It was the steadiness with which Luther kept his mind fixed upon this issue; it was his happy indifference to many points, which the mere Protestant of later days would put most prominently forward—that entitles Luther to our everlasting gratitude. It is this which makes his name more precious to moral and metaphysical students than the names of nearly all the formal writers on morals and metaphysics; that is to say if

they think their studies have anything to do with life and the interests of their race.

The Wittenberg theses.

Luther no champion of private judgment.

How authorities come to be despised.

Luther's treatment of the conscience.

28. The celebrated Theses require to be thought of as well as read. The particular sentences will only become intelligible to the student when he has apprehended the writer's purpose in the whole document. The sense of a struggle of two powers in the man himself, one of which requires to be vanquished, destroyed, sent to hell, that the other may attain the good which it needs and for which God has destined it, makes the thoughts of Luther breathe and his words burn, whatever be the special topic he is handling. The experience of this conflict makes faith not a fine quality but a necessity of his inmost being. He must believe or be crushed and perish. Belief is that which carries him out of himself, above himself. It is no logical act, no process of the understanding. It must be awakened by a Person; it must have a Person for its object. All chains of logic, philosophy, divinity, must be broken that the man may assert his own right to breathe and to be. His homage to the priest, the doctor, the Pope, may be profound, may be extraordinary; but it must yield to this terrible demand. He sets up no private judgment against theirs. He distrusts, dislikes his own private judgment and that of every man. It is to God's judgment he appeals. He invokes Him to deliver him from all conceits, conclusions, reasonings which intercept his passage to the highest throne of the universe, which would measure and determine what he is to ask of the infinite Giver And so, ultimately, all priests, doctors, Popes, mediators of any kind, visible or invisible, must be pushed out of the way because they stand between him and *the* Mediator in whom he can see God and God can see him. But, as we have hinted already, it is not only these outward authorities, nor only the formalities of the understanding or judgment, which Luther is forced, in spite of all his habits and reverence, to discard. He must appear to insult the conscience itself; to treat its monitions as if they were whispers of the devil. Passages innumerable might be produced from Luther's writings in which they are described almost in these terms; passages exceedingly prized and continually quoted by his enemies, and which blundering friends try to explain as if they meant very little. Assuredly they do mean Luther himself. He did not consider what words might signify if they were separated from his life, if they were looked at as mere dictionary phrases. He used them to express the thing that he had to express at the moment, knowing that they would be understood by those who were suffering from the power of evil, as he was, by those who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness, as he was; caring little who else misunder-

What he craved for

stood them; rather perhaps taking pleasure in the thought that to all else they would be hopeless *cruxes*. Deliverance from an accusing conscience was what he needed. Till he obtained it he felt that he was an evil man. He turned to God as the acquitter and justifier; so he became a righteous man. According to an accurate philosophical nomenclature, this might be described as the *emancipation* of the conscience. In times to come it might be important for the very objects which Luther most sought, to assert the awfulness, the sacredness, the dignity of the conscience; to proclaim it as God's voice in man and not the devil's. But he had no calling to settle a philosophical nomenclature. Nor had his lot been cast in an age in which it is one of the most needful, though the hardest of duties, —not for the purpose of advancing a feeble, unpractical, conceited eclecticism, but for the purpose of escaping from that as well as from the narrow dogmatism that provokes it—to examine all seemingly opposed forms of speech and of opinion, that you may not miss the vital force of any truth, that you may not be deprived of any weapon for assaulting falsehood. He belonged to an age when other fields than these were to be fought, and other palms to be won. His language was to be such as belongs to single-handed conflicts. All enemies were to be regarded as the enemies of the man himself. All deliverances and triumphs, though not won by him, were won for him. Society was not to be contemplated as anything in itself; it was to be realized only in the persons of its distinct members. When the Reformers forsook this ground and tried to build up societies, their weakness generally made itself manifest. Then those who looked back to the past or on to the future obtained mighty advantages over them. If it had been possible in the nature of things and according to the purpose of God that men should inquire only after the pillars of their own personal being, Luther would have told them all they wanted to know.

His age very unlike ours.

Individualism.

Influence upon society.

29. But as this was not possible, and as, nevertheless, the search for these pillars was the most essential business of the time, Luther's words produced a far greater effect upon society than those of Savonarola, or of any, even the most earnest politico-religious reformer. In fact, till we get into the political region, till kings and emperors begin to feel that they are interested in the strife, its character—its individualizing character—does not become intelligible to us. From 1517 to 1520, the question whether Luther was right or wrong about indulgences, was debated between doctors. No strife could be more wearisome or more useless. If Dr. Eck claimed the victory over the Professor of Wittenberg, what did it signify? Very likely as a school logician he *had* the victory; very likely Luther bungled

The political battle more important than the scholastical.

Henry and Luther.

in his arguments. It is a wonder that a man was not utterly bewildered and beaten, who tried on his adversary's ground to maintain that his ground was untenable; to overthrow scholasticism with the weapons of scholasticism. It was otherwise when he had fairly burnt Leo's Bull, and when he found himself engaged with Henry VIII. When once he took up the assertion that the vicar of Christ was the antichrist, that the Church was in a Babylonian captivity,—all kings and nations were inevitably committed to the strife. Henry showed his foresight—if he also showed his rashness—in acknowledging the fact, in actually venturing, king as he was, into the lists with a poor monk. His vanity might lead him to exhibit the scholastical lore which he no doubt possessed. But it was his good sense which made him aware of the practical and political interest which lay behind this lore and could not be severed from it. The discovery came more slowly, that kings could only maintain their own prerogative by treating that of the Pope with the contempt of which Luther had set the example. The first and more obvious conclusion was, that if the highest prerogative of all were attacked, that which dwelt in every subordinate ruler would be weakened.

Humanity and the Humanists.

The Bible and Luther Germanized together.

The commonwealth letters vice the church.

30. But what concerns us more than Luther's relation with kings, was his relation to the people. He became more estranged from the Humanists as he advanced in his hazardous course; but he became more human. The Augustinian of 1516, who could only expect that one here and there would care for any true message, found himself an evangelist to the nations. He might retain his conviction that there were few who would be saved. But there was something in each man to which he could speak; he sometimes seems to have suspected that in all but chief priests and Pharisees, the speech might meet with a response. Practically the difference was enormous when he began to translate the Bible into the dialect of the people; when he emerged a German out of his Latin clothing; when he felt that he had an instrument mightier than all the school logic and the popular legends. The first movement in this direction in the fourteenth century, had, we saw, an immense influence upon the whole thought of the period, even upon its formal philosophy. The fifteenth century carried us quite another way. A refined, classical tongue succeeded to the popular tongue. Great effects were to follow from that change also; but comparatively partial effects, reaching to only a small circle. No doubt a commonwealth of letters had been establishing itself in Western Europe since the fall of Constantinople. If a generous Pope, like Nicholas V., would assume the headship of that commonwealth, it would pay him the homage which was his due. That commonwealth

might seem to be a graceful substitute for a Catholic church, under the same Sultan, with more enlightened viziers and pashas. The difficult question in that commonwealth was, how were the serfs to be treated? Were they to continue serfs, that the polished men, the acknowledged citizens, might be admonished of their own superiority, and be prevented from relapsing into ignorance and grossness? Greek precedent was in favour of that arrangement. Could the admirers of Greek precedents depart from it? Neither Leo nor Erasmus was disposed to do so. But neither Leo nor Erasmus had understood the signs of the times, specially what was implied in that great sign—wherein for its benefits to themselves they so greatly rejoiced—the invention of printing. That invention had come from the people, not from the scholars—from German workmen, not from Italian Princes. It would confess its original masters; it would abide in their service. Luther, at least, would reclaim it for that service. The son of the miner was to speak himself—was to let prophets and evangelists speak—in the dialect of his class. The printing-press was to make that word—whether spoken from his lips, whether presented directly through the Holy Book—a possession for those who could comprehend the scholars as little as the schoolmen.

Treatment of the serfs in this commonwealth.

Printing dangerous to the exclusive Humanists.

31. The Peasants' War shows where was the limit to this popular character of the Lutheran Reformation. Luther had a voice which could affect the princes of the empire, in their relations with the emperor and with each other; a voice which could affect far more strongly and deeply the burgher of the town. It could tell less upon the farmer; it could arouse, but only through indistinct echoes, those whom the farmer trampled upon. They cried out for a *social* revolution. A message concerning the burthened conscience was not enough, unless it was accompanied by a message of deliverance from other burthens. The Pope and the Kaiser were distant imaginary foes. The near proprietor, the exacting noble of the district, was their tormentor. Was it true that God cared for men, had really interfered on their behalf? Was the Bible to be taken according to its plain meaning? It clearly spoke of a kingdom not somewhere else, but to be set up on this earth: Christ and His saints were to reign upon it; their oppressors were to be put under their feet. Was not this kingdom coming? Might not they hasten its coming? Reform the Church? No. We need another Church; another baptism, which shall mark out the true elect. And we need that the princes of the earth should pay homage to that Church,—should be broken in pieces if they will not. A very frightful proclamation, pointing to evils of long endurance and existing then, prophetical of much that was

The Peasants' War.

Its character anti-Lutheran.

Anabaptist tendencies how mixed with it.

Luther not cognizant of its meaning.

to come after. Evidently Luther could not interpret the new movement. He could see that it would never have taken place if there had not been great crimes of nobles and farmers to provoke it. He could see that it was to be suppressed, because it was bringing in murder and anarchy But the spiritual principle that was involved in it he could not see. This belonged to another region of thought than that with which he was occupied. These Anabaptists, who seemed to others the extravagant parody of himself, looked to him as Papists under disguise. For were they not leading men to seek in some feelings and conditions of their own minds, for proofs that they belonged to the family of God? Were they not setting aside the faith in God's promises, which he had preached? Were they not refusing to trust the simple witness that had been given to young and old, as the ground and warrant of that faith?

Philosophy and revelation.

32. Neither Luther nor the Anabaptists cared much for philosophy as such. Both started from the opposite point to that from which philosophy starts. Both spoke of a revelation to man, not of a search after wisdom by man. But from the first we have been obliged to take notice of the fact, that the revelation of a living Being does not stifle the thoughts of men, but awakens them; that just in proportion as they believe God is speaking to them, will there be a stir of the whole man, impatience of ignorance, dislike of acquiescence, confidence that the discovery of truth is possible. Luther, who was so weary of teaching philosophy, so desirous to abandon philosophy for theology, gave rise to more philosophy, provoked more eager inquiry into the mysteries of man's own being, as well as into the mysteries of nature, than any one who had sat longest in the philosophical chair, and worn the cloak with the greatest admiration. How the study of nature was influenced by his movement will appear more evidently at a later time. It is our business rather to show what impulse moral and metaphysical study received from him.

Luther's effect on philosophy.

Influence on moral studies.

33. That he was fighting the battle of practical morality when he contended against indulgences, most Englishmen will confess. That he denounced the Aristotelian moralists because he desired to assert the essential dependence of moral *doing* upon moral *being*, we have endeavoured to show. That the protest against Tetzel was inseparable from the fundamental maxim, that evil, not punishment, is what man needs to escape, we have deduced from the very letter of his theses. But these principles, taken alone, might not seem to produce a search after the foundation of morals, rather to take the foundation for granted. The doctrine of justification by faith—that doctrine

Dogmatism overthrown by the doctrine of justification by faith as Luther declared it.

which has so often been treated as a hard dogma of divinity, imposing something on man as the necessary condition of his future felicity—a condition irrespective, it is said, of morality at all—this doctrine it was, when taken in Luther's sense, which made mere dogmatism about morals look contemptible, which compelled the man to take up the position of a student and a seeker. The justice or righteousness of God, a living justice and righteousness, was proclaimed as the deliverance from the bitter curse of the divine law; as that with which the man clothes himself by faith, just as all the grandeur and beauty of the outward firmament become his by sight. What a vision to be presented to poor earthly grovellers at the very moment when they were made most conscious of their degradation! If there was immediate delight and satisfaction in the discovery of a state which was theirs by the highest title, it was evidently a satisfaction involving the idea of a continual progress, a continual ascent. The good was close at hand, close to the beggar and the outcast; but it was an unfathomable good; something to be found and sought for, and found again for ages upon ages.

A deliverance from darkness, and progress in light.

Artificial systems overthrown; reverence for facts.

34. It was, however, the search after Righteousness, not distinctly after Wisdom. It was the search after a foundation for man's being, rather than after Truth for its own sake. But along with this there went a perception of an order in human affairs which God had created, and man had marred, or turned into a mere artificial system. The protest against monasticism, the re-assertion of marriage as a sacred ordinance for priests as well as laymen, the discovery of a worth and divinity in the distinction of nations and races, the unwillingness to recognize anything which could not connect itself in some way with the primary institutions of the family and nation; these were indications of the Lutheran philosophy. They were apparently at variance with some of the maxims from which Luther had started, with that broad line which he drew between civil and divine righteousness. But the opposition was rather on the surface of his statements than at the root of his convictions. He contrasted grace with nature; but he never would allow grace to be confounded with artifice or art; the order of nature, as opposed to the order or system of man's devising, was dear to him.

Marriage human not artificial.

Grace, not art or rule, opposed to nature.

Psychology discouraged by Luther.

35. From all psychological questions, Luther was naturally averse. What had he to do with observing the motions and conditions of his own mind, or with mapping out its provinces? He had to fight the devil, to fly from himself, to trust in One who could deliver him from himself. So far as his message was received into any soul, there was the same impatience of self-introspection, the same acknowledgment of the

Deliverer as especially a Deliverer from the torments which it caused, the same scorn of all experiments for projecting the soul to a distance and contemplating it as if it belonged to some one else. So impossible was it for the practical vehement Lutheran to engage in such investigations, that it seemed as if he preferred the outward to the inward; as if, when he spoke of the divine word, he merely meant the letters in which it was written down—the books of the Bible. For certain followers of the Reformer, this, in time, came to be strictly true. But their dryness and deadness were so directly contrary to all his teaching, were so manifestly a relapse from it into the old scholasticism, that there soon rose up an opposite school to theirs, having, at least in its commencement, far more claims to bear his name, which counted outward teaching as only having any stamp of divinity when it addressed itself directly to the heart and conscience. Abundance of psychology grew out of the experiences and the doctrines of this school. The introspection which the Reformer dreaded became its characteristic. Its teachers parcelled out the soul in the style of the old doctors, even while they disclaimed their guidance and fancied they were adhering strictly to the Scriptural lessons. Luther would have gazed with equal wonder at the literalists and the spiritualists who called themselves his progeny. The claim of each to the title was that he could be shown to have protested vigorously against the other.

His language respecting the Bible, why perverted

Opposing schools claiming Luther's name.

Ontology, how it was affected by the Reformation.

The Absolute Being.

36. What has been called Ontology in former pages of this sketch, suffered a somewhat different fate from the Reformer's influence. Confounded with awe and horror before *the* Being whose eyes were too pure to behold iniquity, he had no thought or leisure to speculate about that Being. The absolute he could not conceive; but he knew it to be real, else how should it crush him even to hell? When he could contemplate this absolute Being in One who was related to him, who bore his own nature, and had suffered for him, its character was wholly changed. But less even than before was he willing to connect it with a logical entity. A living Father in whom love dwelt, from whom grace and forgiveness proceeded, might be testified of in practical discourses to living men, could not be reduced under the forms of the schools. And if it was so with Being in its transcendent sense, he could as little care to talk and reason about the being of any subordinate person or thing. Whatever is, he reverenced; its shows and counterfeits he detested. But did not Being, in the hands of the ontologists, become itself one of these phantoms and counterfeits? In the act of bringing it within phrases and propositions, did it not vanish?

Effects on science.

37. Such a strong rebellion against all logical statements respecting Being, is the natural result of any mighty practical movement. But did that movement involve a disbelief in Science? To many, no doubt, Faith, the watchword of the Reformation, appeared then, as it appears now, the direct opposite of science, if not its antagonist. Was not belief grounded upon assumption? Was not Science the apprehension of principles, of premises?

Faith in the Bible seemingly more opposed to science than faith in tradition.

The Lutheran, appealing to the Bible as an ultimate divine authority, appeared to recognize this distinction no less clearly than the Romanist, who associated with the Bible the interpretations of doctors and the tradition of the Church. He demanded a more direct faith in its assurances than could be demanded for the mass of unknown lore, oral or written, to which his opponents referred. His appeals to the law and the testimony might be used directly against any scientific inquirer who had arrived by his own processes at conclusions supposed not to be in accordance with holy writ. On the other hand, scarcely any conclusion could be put forward which might not find some excuse or precedent in a Church authority, however a general opinion might interfere with it, or a papal decree might come forth to condemn it. Such observations sound plausible, and have, as the after history will show, a foundation in truth.

But not really.

But the Lutheran teaching, which brought out nothing more sharply than the contrast between actual faith and implicit faith, *i. e.*, between faith which is exercised directly upon its object, and faith in the statements of men about that object—did, in fact, diminish immensely the feeling that faith and science were natural enemies. It was almost impossible to speak of faith as that which took hold of an invisible Being, even as that which grasped His word or promise, without looking upon it as a step to knowledge, as an inchoate knowledge. If divines used language which was at variance with this, there was evidence that they were either falling back upon the notions which they professed to have cast aside, or were suppressing one part of their convictions that they might bring another into prominence.

The Lutheran opponents of science involved in a practical dilemma.

Either they were reducing actual into implicit faith, as the Romanists had done; or, in their eagerness to assert the paramount authority of the word of God against them, they were denying the very end for which that word had been given. If it was to be received merely as a dead letter, it had none of the quickening effects which the Reformers had ascribed to it. It did not awaken the heart of man to recognize its divine Deliverer.

Faith and science have common enemies.

If it had this virtue, then it must be as truly an instrument of perception with respect to invisible things, as the senses were with respect to visible things. Once admit such a perception, The senses.

Logic.

and you are on the road to science. For science had been under the same tyranny from which faith was now shaking itself loose. The senses had insulted both, presenting idols of the eye for which they demanded the reverence of the heart—imposing their verdicts as conclusive about the order and principles of the universe, when they could only take account of its phenomena. And logic had divided the empire with the senses, allowing their insolent pretensions that it might maintain its own—making the forms of the intellect the measures at once of the creation, with all its living properties and energies, and of man's relations to the Creator. Luther's vengeance against logic may have been cruel and excessive; but it is doubtful whether any more gentle treatment would have released science out of her captivity—whether the investigators of nature do not owe him as ardent and passionate gratitude as those who believe that he was the instrument of breaking down barriers which separated the children on earth from their Father in heaven.

Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus.

Early life of Agrippa.

His Encyclopædic tendencies.

A theologian

A philosopher.

A physician.

38. In connection with this subject of science, it is our duty to speak of two rather erratic spirits, known to us all by name, who do not belong directly to the history of the Reformation, but who received many influences from it and could have lived in no other age. Cornelius Agrippa, of Nettesheim, was born at Cologne in the year 1486. He began life as a soldier. For seven years he seems to have served in the army of the Emperor in Italy. But he must have been still a boy when he quitted that profession, for in 1506 we find him at Paris occupied with all manner of studies. He is trying to make himself a jurist, a philosopher, a physician, a philologer. Apparently medicine had been his object, but the study of languages withdraws him from it; in 1509 he is professor of Hebrew at Dôle, diligently expounding the book of Reuchlin which we have introduced to our readers. We discover him again in Paris, quarrelling with monks; then obliged to take refuge in London, learning and teaching among us with great activity. Two years after he is at Cologne, not now a philologer but a theologian, deemed worthy, it is said by the Cardinal Santa Croce, to take part in the Council which Louis XII. had summoned in opposition to Julius II. At Paris our theologian is acting the philosopher,—there he delivers a course of lectures on Mercurius Trismegistus. Agrippa is seldom out of disputes. At Metz, in 1518, his troubles are honourable to him. He defends a peasant girl who is accused of sorcery, brings scandal apparently undeserved upon himself and upon her, incurs still greater odium by questioning the truth of a popular legend. Next he appears at Freiburg and at Geneva. Then he is installed as a physician at Lyons. Whatever may have been his learning in Hebrew, theology, or Mercurius,

it is scarcely to be doubted that he started in *this* profession with a very slender stock of knowledge acquired many years before at Paris, and with even less of experience. Nevertheless, it was now that he began to be successful. Louisa of Savoy made him her physician, expecting him also to act in what she considered the congenial, perhaps the inseparable, character of astrologer. Agrippa is said to have uttered some fine sentiment about refusing to gratify a vain and irreligious curiosity. Yet he discovers a genius in this direction also, and foretells success to the Constable of Bourbon, as the servant of the Imperialists against his country. Agrippa's fame is now spread throughout Europe. Henry VIII. and Margaret, the Regent of the Low Countries, are rival candidates for his services. He prefers the latter, offends her according to his wont, yet pronounces her funeral oration. The last days of this man of various fortunes are clouded. He is thrown into prison at Brussels. When he is set free he ventures, notwithstanding manifold and unpardonable offences which he had committed against the French Court, to his old haunts at Lyons. There again he is imprisoned,—is set at liberty,—dies at length in the year 1535 in an hospital at Grenoble.

A court favourite.

A prophet.

Agrippa's place in sixteenth century history.

39. A strange chapter this out of the records of the sixteenth century. One asks naturally what it has to do with these records, whether Agrippa, in the course of his adventures, among the multitudinous thoughts which must have racked his brain, ever came in contact with the men of the Reformation, or the questions with which they were occupied? He had a great respect, it would appear, for Luther and Melancthon. He speaks of the Bible in language which might have tempted them to regard him as a champion of their cause. They erred grievously if they did. He must have valued them simply as destroyers; he can very little have understood what they meant when they declared that they were leading men back to the foundations of their faith for the very purpose of saving it from destruction. He had looked into all studies; he had fluttered through all professions; he had investigated the claims of every art and science. All were vanity and vexation of spirit. Nothing was to be learnt from those that had been boasted of most. They began in nothing; they ended in nothing. Agrippa could prove all this; he could expose the pretensions of all his predecessors and all his contemporaries. Was he not honouring the Bible, and doing God service by establishing the futility of all human investigations?

His relation to the Reformers.

The result to which he came.

Warrant for his scepticism.

40. Such scepticism in a man who had drunk at every stream, clear or muddy, without caring to trace it to its fountain, who had practised all arts, and engaged in all controversies, without

a serious purpose in any, was exceedingly natural. Agrippa's book, *On the Vanity and Uncertainty of Arts and Sciences*, was written towards the close of his career, when he was living in the Low Countries, and no doubt expresses with tolerable fidelity the no-result at which he had arrived. Yet we are paying it too great a compliment when we say this. Cornelius Agrippa was not true even to his own convictions. He knew, or at least he suspected, that there *was* a reality at the ground of the universe; and that every science and every art was a confession of this reality—was an attempt to discover it, or to exhibit some side of it. He delighted—partly out of malice, chiefly, it would appear, from the vanity which he attributed to sciences and arts—to make men think that they all meant nothing—that the deeper we go, the more we shall find a thick mire or a slippery sand. It was, as we think, a very wicked design; far worse than any of the necromantic arts which popular opinion ascribed to Cornelius; more immoral still, because he puts on the cloak of divinity—declaring that, as he adheres simply to Holy Scripture, he cannot use eloquent words, or depart from the simplicity of truth; whilst all the time he is practising every art of the rhetorician, and giving abundant proof that truth is not dear to him at all, that he does not believe there is any way to it. Agrippa had all possible advantages for the argument which he had undertaken. He knew the falsehood of what are called sciences, as Sir Robert Walpole knew the falsehood of what is called history. But as the statesman could not cause that facts should not exist in the region with which he had to do, however much of what is not fact he and others had brought into that region; so Agrippa could not cause that there should not be facts in the regions in which he had practised his quackery; or that those facts should not survive all the notions, opinions, and tricks which had overlaid them; or that there should not be a science of these facts—a method of penetrating through imaginations and speculations about them, into the eternal meaning of them.

His insincerity.

His religion.

Science not affected by his unbelief.

41. In a ranting address to the reader, Agrippa anticipates the conspiracy of all professors of all studies which he shall arouse against him. He proceeds in a discourse on sciences generally to maintain the proposition "that knowledge is the very pestilence which puts all mankind to ruin, which chases away all innocence, and has made us subject to so many kinds of sin and to death also; which has extinguished the light of faith, casting our souls into blind darkness, which condemns truth, and has placed errors on the highest throne." Our readers will easily suppose that great use is made of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and of all passages of Scripture

Agrippa on the Sciences.

The Scriptures.

(few enough), which can be twisted into a commendation of ignorance. But Agrippa is too wise and too anxious for reputation, to rest upon such a weak staff as this. Plato, Aristotle, Jamblicus, Sylla the Dictator, the Emperor Valerius, the Emperor Licinius, are all invoked as witnesses against learning; every scrap of it which Agrippa has collected in his wandering life being used to prove its absurdity and wickedness. The uncertainty of all characters in which people have expressed their thoughts is his next subject. The disputes of grammarians prove that there is no certainty in Grammar. Poetry, of course, is connected with all the absurdities of Mythology, was banished from Plato's Commonwealth, was pronounced the wine of demons by some of the Fathers. Historians are all liars, as can be proved by a number of instances thoroughly well known to Agrippa. In fact, how should any acts be faithfully reported by persons who were not present at the doing of them? Rhetoric is the cause of the decay of commonwealths. Logic must derive its premises ultimately from the senses, and the senses cannot be trusted; and as Christ has said, *Ask and ye shall receive*, all logical processes, which are in themselves very feeble and absurd, must be unnecessary for the Christian. Mathematics were unknown to the ancients even after Aristotle's time. They have to do with spherical or round things; but their professors can never find out anything perfectly spherical or round; Jerome is a witness that they lead men into errors. Lycurgus thought good to banish Arithmetic out of his commonwealth as a troublous thing. It has been the source of superstitions, and is had in price of none but merchants for covetousness sake. Music, which Agrippa understands thoroughly, as he does everything else, is the cause of dishonest lasciviousness, so that the women of the Ciconians did persecute Orpheus to the death, because with his music he corrupted their men. Geometry is very feeble, for no geometrician has found out the true quadrature of the circle. Besides, it is owing to Geometry that warlike instruments have been manufactured, especially guns and other engines that cast fire, about which Agrippa once wrote a volume called Pyrographia, which he now repents of, as it only teaches a damnable skill in doing mischief

Grammar, Poetry, History.

Rhetoric, Logic, Mathematics.

Arithmetic.

Music.

Geometry.

What makes this treatise of any importance.

42. We think our readers must be well tired of this nonsense, which we would not have inflicted upon them if it had not been desirable to show what kind of arguments a man of considerable cleverness and much acquired information, was able to bring together in support of his idle paradox. If his cant and affectation were not so very detestable, one would take pleasure in seeing how little the wearied sophist could do to confound truth and falsehood,—how utterly feeble, after two or three centuries,

Confusions of the time.

the ingenuity on which he prided himself looks. Nor is this, perhaps, the chief benefit which is to be got from this treatise. It was a sign, however melancholy a sign, of the times. The world was out of joint. It was a moment for all quacks and pretenders to show themselves, for all heartless sceptics to try whether they could not bring in a universal anarchy by setting up one principle which earnest men were asserting against another; by using the multitude of lies with which the world abounded as evidence that there was no truth; and then, after another shuffle of the cards, by using the belief which men had in truth as an argument that it could not be found. It was a time in which true men and deceivers might often be mistaken for one another, even men about whose characters after ages can have no reasonable doubt. It was a time, also, in which men might arise who mingled much of quackery with something of a passion for serious inquiry; men whom it is not difficult to convert into heroes or to represent as mere knaves. In this class probably must be reckoned a contemporary of Agrippa, who is often associated with him, though no two men in their evil as well as their good qualities are more markedly distinguished. We speak of Bombast van Hohenheim, commonly called Paracelsus.

Paracelsus.

His pursuits.

Intuition against tradition.

43. Paracelsus belongs to the country of Zwingle. He must have grown up in his very neighbourhood. He was about nine years younger than the Reformer, being born in 1493. Part of his later years were spent in Basle; he was brought to the university of that place as Professor of Physic by Œcolampadius. Whilst there he had the honour of using his art in the service of Erasmus. But in truth, neither his country nor the great men who adorned it, exercised any apparent influence on the mind of Paracelsus. He spent most of his time in wandering on the face of the earth. The literal study of the Scriptures, which was so precious to Zwingle, he scorned; the learning which Erasmus worshipped was for him mere dust and ashes. Whether he had ever studied the old teachers of medicine may be doubtful. If he had, he was quite sure that they had taught him nothing; and that he knew more, or had means of knowing more, than all of them together. Far from despairing of knowledge like Agrippa, it was the object of his continual—one may say of his ardent and intense—pursuit. His impatience of traditional information arose from his belief that the secrets of nature would be revealed to one who did not expect to arrive at them through books, but by direct apprehension or intuition.

Likeness to Roger Bacon.

44. So far we might imagine that he resembled our worthy Franciscan, Roger Bacon; both appeared to forsake the formulas

Chemistry.

The contrast between them.

of logic for actual experiment; both desired to come into direct contact with facts, instead of receiving them at second-hand through digesters and generalizers. No doubt they had points in common. The suspicions they awakened in their respective contemporaries were not altogether unlike. Modern Chemistry confesses obligations to each of them. It has even been alleged that but for Paracelsus it would never have been esteemed a necessary science to the physician. Yet the calm, cautious habit of mind which we attribute, and probably, notwithstanding the many temptations to which his age exposed him are right in attributing, to our countryman must have been wanting in the Swiss. He was not the religious man rising out of the speculations of his order into an actual and reverent acquaintance with the mysteries of nature; but the physical student seeking aid from the spiritual visions of the Anabaptists to fill up the imperfections in his own province of thought. This union of apparently contradictory tendencies and influences ought not to lessen our interest in him. It frightfully increased the danger of his becoming a false prophet by confounding physics and metaphysics. But that confusion is so general, so difficult to avoid in one time or another, that each marked instance of its occurrence should supply us with new warning and instruction, not be a pretext for harsh judgments.

A Spirit in the inquirer and in Nature.

Inconsistencies of Paracelsus.

Moral of his life.

45. The sense of a spiritual power working in himself, mingled strangely with the sense of a spirit working in nature. Sometimes he was sure that he could command it. Then there was the peril of all assumption and self-glorification. Sometimes he would mingle himself with it. Then there was nothing in this spirit that connected itself with human life or duty; he might obey it by giving himself to animal self-indulgence. One hears of Paracelsus aspiring to rule the elements, and having an actual power over admiring disciples. One hears of his coming drunk to his lectures; probably at last being unable to dispense with some maddening stimulus. Each account may be false or exaggerated; but they are not inconsistent. Nor is either inconsistent with the conviction in his own mind that he was pursuing truth, and that he was under a supernatural guidance. A man cannot know much of himself who does not know how near sometimes those spheres approach, which, if one looks at them in their essential nature, one would pronounce the farthest asunder; how not only the heavenly and the earthly but the heavenly and the devilish appear as if they might pass insensibly into each other. It is the awful moral which is sometimes brought home to us with great power by the lives of such men as Paracelsus, and yet which does not want that illustration; the proofs of it he near to us; we need be pursuing no

elixir of life, no quintessence of nature, that we may feel the force of them. It belonged to the time of a Paracelsus, possibly it is the condition of all times, that the sense of spiritual life in man should awaken thoughts of astral influences and all the questions which we connect with the name of Alchemy. The whole world becomes mechanical to us when we are mechanical; dynamical when we are dynamical. The obvious remedy, tried again and again, is to crush life that we may not abuse it or confound the different forms in which it is manifested. We may find more and more that the one effectual remedy is to believe that a Spirit of truth and love and a sound mind is guiding the will and reason of man; and that to obey that Spirit is the condition of entering into all the powers, distinctions, harmonies of Nature.

Astrology.

46. But Paracelsus does not in any sense represent the age to which he belonged. Even the belief of spiritual powers and influences working in others besides priests and divines, leading to physical as well as spiritual discoveries, was not at all its distinguishing characteristic. Luther, we cannot too often repeat it, cared far more to present an Object to the faith of men than to speak of the divine energies and influences which enabled them to contemplate that object. He was obliged to treat faith as an act of ours; his greatest desire was to lose it in Him to whom it was directed. Hence his impatience of the Zwinglian and even the Calvinistic teaching about the Eucharist; hence his conviction that the old language about it, however tainted with sensuality, was safer than that which seemed to make the Divine presence dependent upon the feelings or acts of the creature. If he must take account of those acts, he would go back to his old Augustinian ground. He would refer all to the will of God, nothing to the choice and determination of man. The very same conviction which separated him from the Reformers of Switzerland brought him into conflict with Erasmus. He could tolerate no dream of an independent action in a being who he felt must be the slave of nature or of the evil spirit until he was claimed as the servant of God. No man so influenced the mind of his contemporaries as he did; yet no man seemed to stand so aloof from them. No one was at times so unintelligible even to those who were working with him. The great witness against the hierarchy, hated by its agents as no other man was hated, yet appeared to the doctors of Zurich and Geneva as if he were clinging to the old church with a passionate love. Impatient of divisions and separation, he was yet as incapable of allying himself with the moderate supporters of Reformation as with the extreme; he was odious as much to the scholar of Rotterdam as to the Anabaptists of Munster; he was suspected by Cranmer as he

Objectiveness of Luther's mind.

His Eucharistic doctrine

His strife with all the men of his time.

Philip Melancthon.

had once been attacked by Cranmer's master; saddest of all, he received less and less sympathy as he grew older from his friend and disciple Melancthon. The separation of these two men, never direct and acknowledged even by themselves, but secretly affecting all their thoughts and deeds, is very important in the moral and metaphysical history of the sixteenth century, and is a key to Luther's own position in it and his effect upon it.

Luther and the schools.

47. As a fighter against the schoolmen Luther began. That is his true character to the last. Between him and Aristotle or Aquinas, there could be no fellowship. At times he dreamed of a reconciliation; he repented of his early ferocity: but it could not be. He lived to witness that man is nothing, except as he rises out of himself,—that a man sinking into himself is a dead thing. What peace with those who contemplated man only in himself, whose theology and anthropology were essentially separate? In one direction and another he saw men forging again those chains which he had so fiercely rent asunder.

The Sacramentaries.

The theories of the Sacramentaries revived, it seemed to him, the old self-hunting philosophy, led men to seek that in their own minds which the true Sacrament bade them seek in forgetting themselves. The learned Dr. Calvin, with his good Latin style and French habits of mind, was clearly working out a system of theology, just as Peter Lombard or Gerson had done in former days.

The Moderates.

Erasmus, in still finer Latin, with far less metaphysical power, was erecting a more moderate system, more agreeable to ladylike divines; therefore, of course, more offensive to a stern, practical man, who fought for life and detested refinements.

The Lutheran Formalist.

But Brutus, too, was to strike, and with a sharper dagger. Melancthon was at heart a schoolman—a *Lutheran* schoolman no doubt—one who could translate Luther into formulas; therefore the more perplexing to the man himself, the enemy of formulas. The pupil could not account for the master's sullenness when he had proposed a clear and exquisite statement of doctrine, or a beautiful project of reconciliation. Could the corners be turned more neatly?

Luther's battle with his own formulas.

Could difficulties be more triumphantly evaded or overcome? Luther had no reasonable ground for objections. The principle for which they were contending could not be stated in better language; the opponents on each side, Romish or Protestant, could not be more judiciously handled or more fairly treated. But what had become of that for which the Reformer had suffered anguish in his own soul, for which he had convulsed Europe? Could that all be shut up in a formula? Was it worth fighting and dying for the difference between one mode of expression and another?

Death of Luther.

48. In 1547, Luther found, we may believe, better answers to these questions than he had been able to find during the thirty

years of hard fighting which had preceded. He will have been sure, then, that he had not been engaged in a useless battle; that no courage he had displayed in it had been thrown away; that his failures in it had been forgiven; that he had left blessings to after ages which they would learn to appreciate as the rubbish which concealed them disappeared. That year 1547 marks an epoch in history. It is the end not only of a Lutheràn, but of a German period. Wittenberg has been as much the spiritual centre of this half-century as Florence was of the last. It ceases altogether to be the centre of the next half-century. The war of the Reformation and anti-Reformation may continue fiercely as before, but Germany is not the principal or the most important field of the struggle. The name of Luther is no longer its watchword.

End of the first Reformation period.

CHAPTER V.

SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Loyola not the antagonist of Luther or of Lutheranism.

Calvinism the Protestantism of the latter half of the sixteenth century.

1. HISTORIANS commonly fall into the temptation of contrasting Luther with Loyola. The pretexts for such a comparison are numerous and obvious enough. It fails when one considers the facts of the time and the real principles of the men. The Order of Jesus did not make its power felt till the Reformer's work was done—till a new age had commenced. What is called the revival of Catholicism in the latter half of this century, had to measure its strength with another adversary than the doctrine which took its name from the hero of Wittenberg. If any of those who professed that doctrine fell before the new enemy, they fell after a comparatively feeble struggle. Evidently the cause of Protestantism was not in their hands. In France, in Holland, in Scotland, the name of Calvin—not that of Luther—marshalled the hosts which resisted the Catholic League, the Council of Trent, the new Order.

Importance of the fact to the philosophical historian.

Calvinism and Jesuitism not the same in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

2. That this is the case, the student of the Revolt in the Netherlands, of the Huguenot war, of the conflicts between Mary and Knox, is continually reminded; the student of moral and metaphysical questions frequently forgets it. But it should be impressed at least as deeply upon his mind, or he is likely to mistake the course of all the different lines of thought which present themselves at this time to his examination. Before he can hope to appreciate the philosophers of this age, he must try to acquire some insight into the maxims of those two opposing schools of theology which really divided the hearts and sharpened the swords of men in the interval between the death of our Henry VIII., and the accession of our James I. They must consider them not as they were after this century, but as they were during this century; for though they retained their essential characteristics and were permanent opposites, they present themselves in the seventeenth century under new aspects. We may be able to judge them better by their fruits, but their roots are hidden from us.

Calvin a Frenchman, but still more a Latinist.

3. We have hinted already that Calvin, so far as he was national, had the characteristics of a Frenchman, but that he was far less national in all respects than Luther. He adopted,

without protest, the language of the Church, improved indeed by the Humanists, but not more nearly related to the thoughts and feelings of common people. If Calvinism was in any sense democratic, it was in this sense the very reverse of democratic. It had none of the sympathies which the Romish friar had with the sports and coarser feelings of the multitude. It did not appeal, like the Lutheran evangelist, to old native loyalty, to the impatience of foreign domination, to those human sympathies which demand a Divine Person to meet them and sustain them. The Augustinian side of Luther's mind, that which in his earliest and in his latest writings stood forth in great prominence, but which, in the busiest part of his life, most of all in his discourses to the people, was absorbed into the announcement of an actual Deliverer who came to break men's bonds asunder; this was everything to the Calvinistical teacher; herein lay his power over the minds of his hearers. And a very mighty power it was,—mightier now than it could have been in any earlier age of Christendom, in any time before the Lutheran message had wrought such changes in the outward condition of society. For now the question was forced upon those whose allegiance to the Pope and the system which he represented was broken, On what foundation are we standing? What is a Church if it is not this one which renounces us and disclaims the principle which we affirm to be the Christian principle? If there were to be two bodies struggling with each other, each claiming the name of Church for itself, there seemed to be no alternative. The minority must assert for itself an elder title,—must ascend to the highest Will of all,—must declare that it derived its calling and validity from that Will alone. Nor could it stop at this point. It must denounce the body which assumed the same name with itself, however numerous its members, however venerable its traditions, as rebellious, counterfeit, accursed; the creature of another will than the superior Will; the worst form of that world which that Will had denounced and intended to destroy.

Absence of national sympathies in the Calvinist as such.

Predestinarianism in Calvin and Luther.

Difference of these practical results as to the existing Church.

4. This was the principle, admitting of no modification or compromise, of which the city of Geneva, isolated from the nations, hanging loose to all national sympathies, not properly Swiss or Italian or German or French, shut up in a little circle of local and municipal interests, was to be the proclaimer by the mouth of its great religious organ to the different countries of Europe. In that microcosm within a few years were acted over again the perplexities and contradictions in the relations of the religious ruler and the civil magistrate which had disturbed the Europe whereof Rome, ruled by its temporal and spiritual monarch, was the centre. Evidently they would be

The message from Geneva to the nations of Europe.

Effects of it

renewed in every country in which the Geneva principle should succeed in getting itself acknowledged. But in the meantime it had to carry on a fight, often a very noble, sometimes a victorious, fight with another power which, like it, stood aloof from the nations—which, like it, aspired to govern the nations and to make them portions of a great hierarchy. The battle is full of the profoundest interest; because One higher than the combatants was directing the course and the issues of it; because He had ordained that neither should prevail for the crushing of moral life and hope in the race which He had created and redeemed.

Loyola, his problem.

What question preceded it.

The Jesuit death.

Loyola's exercises.

Causes of the rapid prevalency of the Jesuit maxim.

Its apparent resemblance to the Church maxim.

5. If Calvin laid his axe to the root of the society which had been the growth of fifteen centuries, the mind of Loyola was occupied with the one thought, how that society might be preserved. No one will suppose that either of these was the *first* thought in either of these men; the very nature of their ultimate conclusions showed that it could not be. The question with each was, "What must *I* do to be saved?" Calvin could only refer his own salvation from the mass of human evil to the divine Will and Calling. That Will and that Calling must be the ground of each man's position in the Church; these must create the Church. Loyola could find no peace or safety for himself till he had crushed all his individual tastes, judgments, apprehensions; till he had become a dead man. So he learnt to proclaim, "All of us must be individually dead men, mere instruments of the body to which we belong." This is his idea of a Church. The Order which shall most effectually represent this idea, which shall do the most to crush individual life in its members that the society may work without friction for the object to which it is devoted, this will be the great conservator of the Church; this will be the agent for crushing all heresy and bringing all nations under its yoke. The processes in the soul of the man who arrived at this conviction, who could devise a pharmacopœia of slow or rapid poisons for bringing about the death that he desired, who could then show how a corporate life might be infused into these dead limbs, must have been —as we know they were—very wonderful. But the medicines could not have been accepted so eagerly, or have worked so effectually, if there had not been a preparation in the mind of the times similar to that in the mind of the inventor. It was not merely the exhaustion which follows a great effort for individual life and emancipation, though this exhaustion was one of the symptoms of the time, and might be discovered in worthier men than Cornelius Agrippa. It was not merely that the failure of the Reformers to secure any reasonable approach to unity, even in their own small circles, had thrown men back

upon the unity of the Papacy as a last resource. It was that the doctrine of individual death which Loyola proclaimed, and which he sought to realize, seemed to be involved in the principle of the Reformation, and at the same time to be that which was implied in all the aspirations of the elder Catholic saints. Had not St. Paul spoken of dying daily? Was not the death of self, or of the old man, demanded by those who affirmed faith in Christ and renunciation of our own righteousness to be the great principle of the Gospel and the great necessity of sinners? Was not such abnegation part, if not all, of what was meant by taking up the cross? Might not Loyola have discovered the very formula which all churchmen and all heretics had been seeking after? Might he not have done more than all previous doctors and directors to translate that formula into act?

And to the Lutheran maxim.

Difference of the Jesuit from both.

6. So reasoned many in that time, starting either from the Romish or the Protestant premises, and knew not, or only learnt by painful experience, that they were destroying the one as much as the other in accepting the Jesuit interpretation or consummation of them. The conscience was no doubt as much the subject of Loyola's treatment as it was of Luther's. But if its anguish was to cease only when it had learnt to acquiesce in the decrees of a superior, the idea of faith or trust as the Reformer had held it was subverted, the Protestant might retain his nomenclature, but only at the price of sacrificing all that it had expressed. Such a result the Jesuit would of course have contemplated with delight. To impose an entirely new and opposite conviction upon a heretic under the same name, and so to convert him into a Catholic, would have been a triumph of his divine art. But was he not practising precisely the same art upon the Catholic when he persuaded him that the unity of the Order was the unity of the Church? Was not this also clothing two diametrically opposite things with the same title? A dream of a unity which exhibited itself in infinite variety, of a unity which had that divine and reconciling Name wherein men were baptized at the foundation of it, had been haunting Churchmen in every age. They had felt that a reality to which that dream corresponded was about them in all their speculations and in all their acts. With this vision was blended one of a hard uniform system to which men must needs submit, and to which they must sacrifice their personal and their national existence. These two opposite conceptions were welded together in the person of a Christendom chief, whose patriarchal name and government suggested recollections which his briefs and deeds continually dispelled. The wisdom of the Jesuit consisted in giving sacredness and permanence to *this* notion of unity; in expelling whatever of the older principle was

The conscience, how treated by the two doctors.

The old Catholic Unity subverted by the new Unity.

Hopeless confusion of the Church and the Order.

hovering about it and disturbing it; in changing the Pope from a father into a superior; the superior of the *order* being the complete embodiment of the authority which dwelt confusedly and imperfectly in the superior of the *Church;* the Order itself being to all intents and purposes not the champion of the Church but the substitute for it. A feeling of this contradiction has been working from that time to this, in Popes, in the other orders, in the secular clergy, in monarchs and in nations. Violent efforts have been made to throw off the Jesuit incubus, to sever Catholicism from it. The apprehension of what it is apart from this incubus has not yet been vital enough in the nations of the south to give these efforts success. The Teutonic nations have helped them little in discovering the way to their object. In the history of national wars and revolutions, and of the conflicts of opinion that have accompanied them, far more than in the controversies of divines, we discover how all things have been tending towards the vindication of what is true in every faith of Christendom, toward the destruction of its counterfeit.

The future separation of the divine and counterfeit elements.

7. But an Englishman can never forget that the latter half of the sixteenth century is the Elizabethan age in his own land. He cannot but ask himself what that age, as it presents itself to him in the Queen herself and in the explorers, warriors, statists, poets who illustrated it, had to do with those powers which we have described as the conflicting powers of the period. It will instantly occur to him that Elizabeth's rod was stretched over both, that her decrees, and not merely her decrees, went forth against the disciples of Loyola as well as against those who had learnt their lore at Geneva or at Frankfort. If we might admit the theory of the most popular historian of the nineteenth century, and hold that the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry VIII., constructed a system of compromise between the Catholicism and Protestantism of his generation, leaving the feeble and ridiculous arrangement as a trust for all subsequent Archbishops and Monarchs to defend, we might perhaps be prepared with a solution of the difficulties which belong to the reign of the last Tudor. But since that doctrine, had it appeared under less distinguished patronage, would certainly have been regarded as the extravagant conceit of some pedantical Anglican divine—attaching an importance to the notions and doings of Archbishops which never yet belonged to them, and giving to Cranmer especially a weight which those who think far better of him than the noble historian does have never assigned to his fair abilities and rather subservient character—we cannot be excused from seeking some other interpretation of the acts and triumphs of Queen Elizabeth than the notion that she felt her-

England under Elizabeth.

Lord Macaulay, vol. i., Introduction.

This explanation not satisfactory for any part of the Tudor period.

self pledged to the defence of an ecclesiastical system which had not courage to ally itself with the thorough Reformers of Knox's type, or with the bold reactionaries of the Council of Trent. A reign so vigorous and so productive must, one would think, have been maintaining some other principle, have been quickened by some other inspiration, than this.

8. It seems to us that Queen Elizabeth's reign could not have been what we are all inclined to think that it was, if she had been able to quench either of those principles which were then struggling in Europe for ascendency, or to discover any method, such as German Emperors aimed at, of pacification between them. Elizabeth clearly dreamed of no such pacification, not even of an interim-truce. What she could do she would to suppress the assertors of each principle, as disturbers of the order of her kingdom, as enemies to her own authority. She could not suppress either. In the next age, when a pedant had succeeded to a sovereign, they were to burst out in all their virulence as *opinions;* it was to be shown that there were *principles* latent under the opinions which could make themselves felt in every home and in every heart. In her reign, each was contributing an element of strength and vitality to her thinkers and her fighters. If Puritan assemblies were put down the Calvinism which they asserted was wrought into the minds not only of the divines of the day, but of its most popular writers. If seminary or Jesuit priests were banished or executed, they had the consolation of thinking that the Catholicism they defended was acting, not less than the Calvinism, on the heart of the people and of their teachers. If either had been absent, we could have had no "Faery Queen" or "Othello." The alkali and the acid produced a healthy effervescence; no neutral salt had as yet resulted from their combination. The Queen herself, however little she knew it, however much she would have repulsed the suggestion, united in herself the Calvinistic and the Catholic elements. She *did* know that she was an English Queen. That position, without reference to dogmas, she was determined to maintain. And by maintaining it she became the assertor of a third principle as strong as either the Calvinistical or the Jesuitical. She became the defender of the great national principle which each of them ignored or scouted, though both Calvinists and Catholics in their own countries—the Colignys and the Howards of Effingham—bowed to it, and confessed it as godly. It could not be a substitute for principles which concerned a universal Church and the whole condition of humanity. It might preserve one from being utterly destructive of the Church, both of humanity.

Elizabeth not at all inclined to compromises.

Calvinism and Catholicism both real forces in the English mind and the English literature.

The Queen herself unconsciously Calvinistic and Catholic; consciously a sovereign.

The national principle.

9. From these observations the reader may easily conjecture

Questions of the time.

Politics.

Will and reason.

Science.

Mingling of Theology and natural study.

Dialectics.

in what line men's thoughts were most likely in this time to run, and to what causes any deviations from that line may be referred. Questions concerning polities, the ground upon which they rest, whether there is one form of polity which is essentially divine; how, if there be, the existing societies on earth are connected with it; how those societies are linked together; these were the necessary subjects of debate in the time which followed the dissolution of the apparent unity of the West. Calvinists, Romanists, Englishmen, must all engage in this battle, must each contribute their help to bring it to an issue. Calvinists, Romanists, Englishmen, starting respectively from their different beliefs of a polity directly ordained by God, of a polity organized under the Vicar of Christ, of a polity directed by a national sovereign, would all alike have a *tendency* to exalt mere will above reason, would each be compelled by the arguments of the other to show how the government it defended was consistent with reason. The battle therefore of predestination and free-will would be always lying at the ground of all the thoughts of the time, always ready to break forth. But it would be more connected with politics than strictly with metaphysics; this would be the era for those nations and those intellects which are unable to view metaphysics apart from politics. On the other hand these questions would provoke a reaction on the part of the more purely scientific minds. The continued reference to authority by all the disputants respecting ecclesiastical or civil government would drive *them* into a search after principles of order which mere power or rule could not interfere with; the perplexities of human procedure and the perversions of human wills would tempt them to seek for that Order in nature. The impulse to physical inquiries of which Paracelsus was the most striking example in the former part of the century, became much more decided, and led to more severe investigations in the latter part of it. Neither politics nor natural studies had been able in any age to sever themselves from Dialectics. How they were related was the most interesting problem of the Platonic philosophy. The logic of Aristotle expanded and developed by the schoolmen would have controlled both. Politics, now that they had become practical and connected with the living interests of mankind, were showing manifest signs of impatience under the bondage. The inquirer into nature was beginning to be more impatient still. The logical methods must be revised. The schools must see whether they can, by recurring to old principles or discovering new, adapt themselves to the demands of mankind. There is the strongest feeling that somehow or other they must minister to the world and its living necessities; that to ignore these was to be crushed by them.

University of Paris.

10. The first and most flagrant example of this rebellion which we have to record, took place in the University of Paris. Whatever reactions of Nominalism against Realism had occurred in that University, it had continued on the whole singularly faithful to Aristotle. But Francis I. had established colleges which savoured of the new time, and were a balance to the power of the Sorbonne. And now there commenced in one of these colleges an assault, not on the outworks, but on the very heart of the old system. This fact ought to be remembered by those who are studying the history of French philosophy. The most intelligent critics of that history, in our day, regard Peter Ramus as the direct spiritual ancestor of Descartes On that ground alone his life and opinions would be full of interest; but they concern the whole European movement of the age as well as a man for whom no reader can help feeling a strong personal affection.

Peter Ramus.

De Petri Rami Vitâ Scriptis Philosophiâ Scripsit. C. Waddington-Kastus Parisiis, 1848, (Dedicated to V. Cousin).

11. Peter Ramus was born in the year 1515, in a village named Cuthe in Picardy. He is said to have been of good family, but he was the son of a collier. At eight years of age he came up to Paris, so his biographers assure us, simply to get learning. The poor child was unable to get bread. An uncle who was a carpenter took him with him into Spain first to work with him at his trade, then, when he turned soldier, as an errand boy. On the restoration of peace he returned to Paris for a time, procured clothing and food from his uncle; when that resource failed, became bed-maker in one of the Colleges of the University. Being permitted to attend the lectures in the intervals of his work, he contrived by sleeping three hours at night to have time for private reading. He did not merely reduce what he had heard into possession, he became an ardent questioner into the meaning and worth of it. "I had a hard bodily servitude to go through," he says, "but in my mind I was never servile; I never lost heart." The brave student was not without friends. One there was whom we scarcely expect perhaps to find engaged in so honourable a task as that of upholding a poor servitor, and of being his champion against powerful enemies through a great part of his life. It is pleasant to remember this incident in the career of the Cardinal of Lorraine. He evidently loved Ramus in his low estate, and he did not desert him when he maintained one of the most audacious propositions ever put forward in Paris, or any other University, as the theme of his disputation for the degree of Master of Arts. "*There is nothing but falsehood in the writings of Aristotle;*" this was the maxim which Ramus undertook to support in the presence of the doctors of Paris. A certain amount of paradox was tolerated, perhaps expected, in can-

Work and study.

The Thesis for a degree

didates for degrees. But this passed all reasonable limits; it must evidently mean something. Ramus was clearly in earnest. He wished his hearers to take his thesis seriously; he put forth all his strength in support of it; his opponents put forth all their strength. He issued from the disputation amid loud applauses; the astonishment he excited was in proportion to his success. The Aristotelians in Paris felt that the cause which he had pleaded in this early display, would be the cause which he would plead through life. What he had done was talked of throughout all France; the fame of it reached to Italy. Tasso alludes to it in his "Pensieri;" all Paris, he says, was confused and stupified by the boldness of the young man. Charles of Lorraine seems to have been charmed with the courage of his fellow-disciple. If the divines foresaw that the heretic in philosophy would also be a heretic in theology, there is reason to suppose that the great ecclesiastic of the Guise family would at this time of his life have been rather amused than scandalized by that discovery.

Effects of the disputation.

Ramus and his fellow-workers.

12. From this time forth (1536), Ramus becomes the leading figure in the University, teaching in one of those gymnasia or colleges to which we have alluded, in company with two friends closely united to him in intellectual and personal sympathy. One of these, Omer Talon, devoted himself to Rhetoric, the other (Campanus) to Greek, Ramus himself to Dialectics. This co-operation was necessary to the reform which Ramus contemplated; and he was a very Radical Reformer. The Aristotelians had given Logic a dominion over all the pursuits in which men have a living and practical interest. To win for it that authority they had clogged it with inventions and subtleties. It could only be restored, Ramus thought, by being made again into a humble minister of humane arts and humane life. The teacher of Rhetoric and the teacher of Greek should find that it was willing to learn its principles from their practice; then its rules and maxims would not be continually embarrassing them; its barbarisms would not be continually offending them; it would become their friend and helper. In 1543 Ramus put forth his two most important books, the foundations of his fame and of some of his greatest troubles. Each was intended to illustrate the other. One contained his own dialectical method; the other was a vigorous denunciation, in twenty books, of the Aristotelian method. The consequences of this last work might have been anticipated. The University was in arms; Ramus was represented as a disturber of all arts, a transgressor of all laws human and divine. In the words of his friend Talon, he was accused of taking the sun out of the firmament. The Rector of the University brought the matter before

His idea of reform.

The two dangerous books.

a tribunal specially constituted for the purpose. Out of five judges, Ramus was allowed to select two; they succumbed to the other three; the books were condemned. In 1544, Francis I. sent forth his decree that they should be suppressed and abolished, that any one attempting to print them should be liable to confiscation of goods and personal punishment. No one was henceforth to indulge in any invectives against Aristotle or any ancient and approved authors. Ramus was forbidden to lecture; his enemies complained that the decree did not go far enough; he ought to have been banished for ever from the realm—the galleys were hinted at.

Royal sentence upon them; no ancient authors to be slandered.

13. The Cardinal could not avert these calamities from his friend; but in the year 1547, on the death of Francis I., he had influence enough with the new Monarch to get the sentence annulled. For four years Ramus exercised all his former functions in the University, but devoted himself with special earnestness to the criticism of Cicero, Quintilian and even Virgil. The novel experiment of combining literature with dialectics, so important for the purpose of Ramus, was likely enough to provoke the hostility of venerable pedants. But his older opponents had, it appears, been conciliated by his kindness as well as his ability; they found that his vehemence was spent upon dead authors, and that his disposition towards personal foes was eminently forgiving. They gained also in Ramus a most able fellow-worker in their opposition to the Jesuits, who were at this time seeking to establish themselves in the University, and who, like the Mendicant Orders in former days, would probably not desist till they had changed its customs and made themselves supreme in it. That the Reformer was a Conservative against these intruders was an additional motive to the wrath of a young antagonist, a man named Charpentier, who was an ally of the Jesuits, and had personal reasons for disliking Ramus. He began with a complaint against the Professor for violating the statutes by including different subjects in his lectures. Shortly after, he aspired (in conformity, as he affirmed, with these statutes) to be a Professor of mathematics, for which science he had always professed the greatest contempt, and of which he was ostentatiously ignorant. Ramus, equally a champion of physical as of human science, resisted the monstrous ambition, and earned Charpentier's everlasting hatred. There was some fuel to feed it. The courage which Ramus had displayed in one region of thought did not desert him in another. He had been a conscientious and devout Romanist; he became as conscientious and devout a Calvinist. What it must have cost him to make the change, still more boldly to avow it, may be understood when we remember that he not only looked up to the Cardinal of Lor-

The decree reversed by Henry II.

The Jesuit invasion.

Charpentier

Conversion of Ramus to Protestantism.

raine as his patron, but with personal gratitude and affection. That friendship Ramus, of course, sacrificed; Charpentier became the protégé of the Cardinal.

Ramus still a teacher in Paris.

His perils.

His journeys.

Ramus at Geneva.

His sympathies with the place.

Beza rejects him.

Aristotelian logic necessary to Calvinism as a system.

14. In the vicissitudes of those times it did not follow as a matter of course that the Calvinist would be banished from the orthodox University. Besides the many turns of court favour and policy, there was the dislike of the University to the new order, and the great influence which Ramus himself had acquired, by his eloquence and his general scholarship, to uphold him in his position. Once Charpentier was actually imprisoned and obliged to make a recantation for having charged Ramus with atheism. His revenge required other resources. Several times Ramus was threatened in his lecture-room by hired assassins. When the second civil war broke out in 1567, he fled to the camp of Condé, but returned to Paris six months after. At the beginning of the third wär obtained permission from Charles IX. to visit the different Universities of Europe. His journey was curious on many accounts. In Germany he was welcomed as a noble champion of learning and truth; Bullinger, at Zurich, embraced him as a brother. But Theodore Beza, who reigned in Calvin's stead at Geneva, regarded him with extreme coldness and suspicion, and refused him permission to lecture. This is an important incident in the records of the time. A French Reformer means, of course, a Calvinist. Ramus had no temptation to become a Lutheran or to accept any other form of doctrine than that which prevailed among the Huguenots. It was the one which had the most natural affinity with his philosophical convictions. Aristotelianism and the new Catholicism were becoming the closest allies. He who appealed to reality and simplicity against the system which had held its ground for centuries in the schools, naturally listened with interest and sympathy to the Calvinistical language respecting the simple Apostolical platform for a Church, and the authority of the New Testament as opposed to that of Fathers and Councils. But he had soon to discover that there were two sides to this doctrine; the popular side, which attracted towards it such men as Coligny and William of Orange—the dogmatic side, which if not predominant in Calvin himself, was that which he could alone hand down to his successors. According to his express directions, faithfully and heartily obeyed by Beza, the old logic was to be the training for the Genevan Theologian. The Institutes just as much required the machinery which Ramus attacked for their support as any books of Aquinas. Ramus was eager enough to honour the city of Calvin as the Metropolis of Protestantism, but for any philosophical liberty which he found there he had better have been in Paris. He returned to

his old haunts: after the promises which the Court held out to the Huguenots, what place could be safer? He resumed his work; complaints of his Calvinism became loud; he soon learned how they had affected his old patron. In a touching and manly letter he reminded the Cardinal of their early friendship, and of words which he had once spoken (almost amounting to a reproof), that Ramus, of all those who were dependent on him, alone had never asked a favour at his hands. He confesses his faith boldly. He desires to devote his declining years to the illustration of the Old and New Testament. That design was partly accomplished. His last work was a Commentary on the Scriptures; his object, as he said, being to show "that Christian Theology was not so removed from the sense of common people as had been imagined; that there was a light in it which might shine upon all; that men might be attracted by humane studies to divine." Though this letter did not win back Lorraine, Ramus had still temptations from the Court. He was asked to accompany a Bishop into Poland that he might maintain the pretensions of the Duke of Anjou there. A miserable destiny indeed for such a man. He was reserved for a nobler. "A good orator," he replied to the Bishop, "must be a good man. A good man will not let out his tongue for hire." So he stayed in Paris till the fatal wedding. He did not fall on the Bartholomew night. Two days had passed away—enough of blood had been shed to satisfy the thirst of the Court—when assassins broke open the door of his college and struck him down. "Against thee have I sinned; forgive these murderers," are said to have been his last words. The body was dragged through the streets and thrown into the Seine. There was little doubt at the time, and De Thou has given his sanction to the opinion, that Charpentier was the author of the crime.

His letter to the Cardinal.

Ramus a Biblical commentator.

Will not be panegyrist of the Duke of Anjou.

St. Bartholomew.

Charpentier's vengeance.

Petri Rami, Veromandui, Animadversionum Aristotelicarum. Libri xx.; Ad Carolum, Lotharingum Cardinalem Guisianum Lutetiæ, 1548.

15. The work of this pure minded and noble man which we would especially commend to our readers, if they wish to understand his purpose and his influence upon the time, is his *Animadversiones Aristotelicæ*. It cannot, indeed, be separated from his own Dialectics, of which it is a vindication. But, on the other hand, these Dialectics will be very little understood from his compendium of them without this commentary. The Animadversions are full of a reformer's vigour and fierceness. He evidently feels that compromise is out of the question. Such a reputation as Aristotle's cannot be pared of any of its boughs or leaves; it must be rooted up. To this task Ramus girds himself, excited as he frequently tells us, partly by the recollection of the time he had himself wasted in the school discipline, partly by the consciousness of the host of champions of that discipline whom he was defying. The great maxim of the first book of this trea-

tise is, that Dialectics, like all other studies, must have three elements—Nature, Art, Practice. The art must proceed from the observation and imitation of what men actually do. They reason and argue before they are taught anything about reasoning and arguing. The art consists in observing and recording how they reason and argue, just as much as the art of the painter consists in observing the actual face which he paints. It is as absurd, he contends, to make the art of the dialectician determine the course of reasoning, as to make the art of the painter determine what shall be the lines in the countenance. This absurdity he attributes to the Aristotelians; it is the root of all their other absurdities. "They do not propose to themselves in their art the imitation of Nature, *i. e.*, of natural reason and of popular and human experience." He maintains that they have never fairly asked themselves what they mean by Dialectics; that with all their fondness for definitions, they have never defined their own pursuit.

Quid vero? Dialecticæ partes quot sunt? Tres proponi ab Aristotele debuerant Natura, Ars, exercitatio. p. 8.

Constet igitur vim rationis, mentibus nostris a natura insitam (per quam sine decretis magistrorum disputamus et ratiocinamur) non modo esse dialecticæ primam partem sed eam esse partem, cum usu confirmata sit, quam secunda imitari debeat, p. 10, 11. See the chapter De Quæstione, pp. 14-28, and the following De partibus artis Inventione et Dispositione, pp. 29-48.

16. This introduction leads us to that part of the subject which we have so often pressed upon the notice of our readers. He complains that Aristotle is un-Socratic, even anti-Socratic; that in him there is no questioning; that consequently *Invention*, or the discovery of premises, is entirely absorbed into the second part of the art which he calls *Disposition*, or the treatment of arguments from admitted premises. To this cause Ramus attributes the infirmity and clumsiness of the Aristotelians in their management of that part of the subject with which they do occupy themselves. The divisions into terms, predicables, predicaments, interpretations, analytics, topics, proofs (elenchi), do not correspond, he affirms, to nature and human experience. They are an artificial machinery, introduced by those who have lost sight of the end for which the art exists. And herein also he discovers a justification of his own procedure in connecting logic with other studies. He does not confound Logic with Literature; that is the error of his opponents. Half of their technicalities are due to the intrusion of the dialectician upon the provinces of the grammarian and the rhetorician. Let a boy understand something of the principles of grammar, nay, let him even know his parts of speech, let him learn some of the figures into which speakers are led, not in conformity with formal rules, but by the necessities of discourse, and most of these high-sounding divisions, so far as they have any meaning at all, will be already familiar to him, and he will not confound the forms of words with the forms of thought and reasoning.

Detur mihi puer grammaticis et rhetoricis id est antecedentibus studiis informatus, qui partes orationis et earum conjunctionem et accentum et orthographiam teneat que tropos, figuras, numeros; huic in dia-

17. The same subject is pursued in the second book upon *Terms*. A sentence or two will illustrate the feeling as well as the object of Ramus, and may recall to some of our readers pas-

sages in Milton's Letter to Mr. Hartlib. Indeed, the scheme of Milton's Education is an expansion of the principle of Ramus, of whom our poet was a professed student and admirer. "What, I pray you, will any boy gain through your *Terms*, of humanity from the poets, of elegance from the orators, of science from the mathematicians, of dignity from the rest of the culture of a gentleman? How do you use your Terms? In shouting, screaming, debating *about* terms. Grammar is used for the explanation of Cicero or Virgil, for speaking, for writing, not for declaiming on its own precepts. Your whole doctrine of Terms never stretches beyond itself. Therefore, boys who have been before liberally brought up, when they come to these disputes about terms, acquire barbarism and folly together, forgetting all the purity of words the beauty of discourse which they had obtained in their previous studies. They have no leisure for the orators, they have no taste for the poets; all their business is to clamour about Terms." A little vehement, perhaps, but scarcely a caricature of university discipline in times later than the sixteenth century.

lecticis simplicius nihil erit quam ut discat invenire argumenta probabilia, &c., p. 39.

Lib. 2; De Terminis, pp 49-59.

P. 56.

The logicians busy about the forms of logic; indifferent about all that lies beyond them.

18. The third book is on the Predicables of Porphyry. It is an acute, and it seems to us a very interesting discussion on the true use of the words *Genus* and *Species;* an attempt to rescue what he considers the common sense of them from the Aristotelian technicalities. "A man tells me," he says, "that the Seine at Paris is dried up; I deny it; to end the controversy we go to the spot and ascertain the fact with our eyes. A man tells me that genus is that which is predicated *in quid* of many things that differ in *species.* He tells me that in species, John and James do not differ. I, on the contrary, affirm that they do differ in species, and that they are different species of Man. I contend that that is genus which holds together like parts in communion; that any species is a part subject to this genus; that whether it has or has not other parts under it, makes no difference. I wish to try this question as I tried the other; I want no dreams or comments. Let us suppose ourselves living in the times before Aristotle had talked of these matters. . . . . Let it be considered what the thing itself is, and what men mean by the words *Genus*, *General*, *Generally*, *Generically*, and by these, *Species*, *Special*, *Specially*, *Specifically*, when they use them in a natural use; then let it be decided which of these methods a reasonable dialectic will follow."

Lib. 3, pp. 66-85.

P. 66; Dicis Sequanam Lutetiæ exaruisse, &c.

Genus and Species. Every individual really a species under some Genus. (Ramus dwells much on the hysteron-proteron involved in Porphyry's method—the notion of species being presumed in the definition of Genus.)

19. The fourth book is on the Categories. The object of Ramus is to show the inutility of the Aristotelian Categories for their professed purpose, and to substitute for them his own. Ramus contends that many things which are utterly unnecessary to the real business of the dialectician are in-

The Categories of Ramus are Causæ, Effecta, Subjecta, Adjuncta, Dissentanea, Comparata, Nomina, Tributiones, Initiones, Testimonia, p. 87. Compare his Dialecticæ (Hanoviæ, 1612), Lib. I.

Lib. 19, pp. 439-446.

Lib. 20, pp. 447-454.

P. 443; Esto, Protei sint Aristotelei.

eluded in the predicaments of Aristotle; that many which of right belong to that business and are necessary to it are passed over. The whole question evidently resolves itself into the one which is considered in the first book,—What is the business of the Dialectician? Whether, if that point *were* decided in favour of Ramus, his Categories would be the best possible, may still admit of a long discussion: *till* it is decided, any comparison between them and those which they pretend to supersede is clearly a hopeless and useless one. The same remark applies to the criticism in the fifteen following books on the different logical treatises of Aristotle. These we will pass over. The nineteenth book, which is on *Method*, demands an observation or two. If the student will be at the pains to consider the remarks which he will find here upon Genesis and Analysis (not rashly substituting *Synthesis* for Genesis, because that is *our* common opposition), he will gain much light upon the whole of the controversy in the sixteenth century between the natural and the artificial logicians; and he will be able to trace the links between the natural or experimental *Dialectician* and the pure *Naturalist* or experimentalist of the "Novum Organum." It should be read together with the last book on *Practice* or *Exercise*. The conclusion of the nineteenth may be taken as the summary of his treatise, and as setting forth the hope which cheered Ramus to undertake it. After quoting the passage from the Georgics describing the different arts of Proteus and the forms which he would assume, he proceeds:—"Our Aristotelian is this Proteus. But he will not escape us always; there will be some end and limit to fallacy. The poet represents Proteus as very dexterous and cunning, but he tells us also that if he is perseveringly tormented and held fast, he will be at length compelled to yield.

Sed quanto ille magis formas se vertet in omnes
Tanto, nate, magis contende tenacia vincla
Donec talis erit mutato corpore, qualem
Videris incœpto tegeret cum lumina somno.

Conclusion.

"Let us, therefore, be constantly pressing these Aristotelians! Let us be opposing them with that demonstration of ours! Let us hold them fast in the chains of natural experience and human sense! If they continue to be obstinate, let us call to our aid the sharpest and most certain weapons! Fatigued and vexed, they will turn themselves at last to the light of Nature. They will confess their errors, and unite themselves with us in a blessed league to work for the defence of truth and for the enlargement of its borders." With this quotation we must take our leave of Ramus, thanking him for his efforts to fasten Proteus down, and believing that his work has been rewarded to his honour and our benefit; though it may be that Aristotle had still some services to do for the world in spite of these confutations, and though Ramus may have supplied arguments and railings to men who had none of his passion for truth, men who need to be fastened with the same chains as the schoolmen, their enemies, that they may not be equal or greater obstacles to free and manly study.

Literature always bordering on the region of philosophy.

Shakspeare.

Rabelais

Reasons against attempting to penetrate his ethics or metaphysics.

20. As we advance in our sketch, we are continually reminded how thin and almost imaginary is the line which separates the popular thought and action from the scholastical; Ramus, bred a schoolman, was, we see, busier than any one in his efforts to efface it. But for this very reason we are obliged to be more rigid in determining whom to notice or pass over, lest we should find ourselves interfering with the whole realm of literature under pretext of its close relations with philosophy. It will be obvious that the temptations to this latitude become especially strong in the sixteenth century. An Englishman who knows how much the technical as well as the practical philosophy of his countrymen has been affected by Shakspeare, must often feel inclined to dwell upon the ethics, if not upon the metaphysics, of his plays. If he restrains himself from that indulgence, he may, perhaps, escape the censures of Frenchmen for not plunging into the philosophy of Rabelais. No doubt that learned man may have introduced very much more of what is strictly called philosophy into his wildest extravagances than our unlearned actor. It may be, as some moderns have maintained, that his main object was philosophical. But to plunge into this question with the chance of committing a multitude of mistakes respecting the language of the author as well as his allusions, still more with the certainty of involving ourselves in the moral perplexities of those who seek for gems or gold amidst ordure, would be no proof of wisdom, or therefore of true valour. If the subject is to be illustrated, it must be left to some of the accomplished countrymen of Rabelais: they, as well as we, might tremble to see the task even approached by a foreigner.

Montaigne—Born 1533, died 1592.

Montaigne's philosophy all contained in himself; not the least a set of opinions which he formed or adopted.

21. But as the most technical of German writers on the history of philosophy do not feel themselves justified in passing over Montaigne, we who probably have received much more influence from him than the Germans, are bound at least to point out some of the ways—good or evil—in which we suppose he may have affected us. A man who is simply himself, and cares only to express himself and his own feelings and thoughts as they arise, or as they have formed themselves into his character; whom the most skilful Linnæus or Jussieu cannot put into any class or division; whom no Cuvier can reckon

among the remains of an extinct world—he has so clearly all the signs of being a genuine and living inhabitant of ours; who, in a time when lying is reduced to a system, has a thorough abhorrence of lying, and yet no great hope of ever arriving at truth; who is happy and contented in the midst of the miseries of his country and the world, yet nowise deficient in benevolence or sympathy; a keen critic of men, and an observer of all their weaknesses, but with a full consciousness that they are also his own; an admirer of goodness, with no keen or painful sense of badness; in the midst of the casuistry of confessors and directors setting up his own confessional and being his own spiritual director, perhaps, we may say, his own absolver—such a man is, as all have felt, a curious spectacle, worthy to be studied for his unlikeness to most of the specimens about him. Though possessing a kind of talent which is characteristically French, he was singularly unlike his countrymen in their love of organization and system, in their impatience of anything which will not submit to be labelled—white or red, or mixed red and white. For this peculiarity he has found his chief sympathizers amongst us. Lord Halifax, who had caught so many of Montaigne's qualities himself, wrote to Cotton to thank him for his translation:—"You have the original strength of his thought, that it almost tempts a man to believe in the transmigration of souls, and that he being used to hills is come into the moorlands to reward us in England for doing him more right than his country will afford him." Whether this remark is true now or was ever true to its full extent, there can be little doubt that Montaigne's kind of philosophy, just because it has none of the formality of philosophy, and is part of the man who uttered it, began in the sixteenth century, and continued through a great part of the eighteenth, to harmonize wonderfully with our dislike of what is precise, with our indifference to what we describe as "mere abstract truth;" to counteract some of our strong national feelings; to associate itself with others; so that in the upper classes of society at least, and perhaps also in the professional, none has been so abidingly popular. The quaint wits of James I.'s reign, the writers of the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, owe much to Montaigne. The intermediate period of the seventeenth century produced many men like Halifax, who were more positively and practically influenced by him than either; but for various reasons, which we shall have to consider, the power of the Frenchman was far less apparent in the English literature of this century than in that which preceded and followed.

Belongs to no school.

His contrasts.

More practically influential in England than in France.

At what period, and over what class.

Estimate of this influence.

22. Montaigne, therefore, has earned for himself a place in the history of Metaphysical and Moral Philosophy, if it is only

because he indicates a change in the feelings of a certain class of men respecting Metaphysics and Morals, a despair of finding any solution of the problems of the one either from authority or from reason; a notion that the other might be more safely trusted to the instincts and cultivated sense at least of gentlemen than to the judgment of professional sages of any school. How far these instincts and this sense would go, where they would have to beg help from the vulgar wisdom which they despised, or from the principles of Schoolmen and Divines which they ignored, time and experience would demonstrate. Without awaiting their decision, something may be learned on that subject from Montaigne himself. His apology for Raimond de Sehonde, the largest and most elaborate of all his essays, is the one from which a German or French systematizer would most hope to arrive at some definite conclusions respecting his philosophy. No doubt, the general statement that it is altogether sceptical, would be true in itself, and could be sustained by a hundred different passages. But how would an ordinary reader, who had accepted that account of the treatise, be startled by finding that its main purpose is to defend the proposition of a Spanish physician, that Christians are in the wrong to endeavour to make human reasoning the basis of their belief, since the object of it is only conceived by faith, and by a special inspiration of the Divine grace? Perhaps he would be more puzzled still if he learnt that the book which maintains this doctrine undertakes to establish and verify all the articles of the Christian faith against objectors, from reasons that are human and natural. If a student thinks that these statements are not in themselves incompatible, that Raimond may have consistently admitted a divine foundation for human reasoning—a divine energy to produce human belief—he may yet be at a loss to conceive how an apologist for a work combining these principles should be a sceptic, and should nowhere exhibit his scepticism more than in this very defence. The explanation is not that Montaigne is ironical. There is no covert sarcasm; here, as elsewhere, if he laughs he laughs openly; his discourse winds along with its usual variety of observation and illustration, its usual quaint conceits; you cannot imagine that he is not telling you what he means, or that he is taking a sly method of converting you to some opinion which he would rather conceal. At first you ask yourself what the discourse has to do with the text from which it starts. For it wanders into an exposition of the knowledge which foxes, by certain acts of theirs, show that they possess of the doctrine of liquefaction and congelation; it adduces proofs that there is a faculty by which magpies imitate the sound of a trumpet, by which elephants dance to music,

Apology for Raimond de Sebonde, Essays, Book II.

Montaigne not an ironist in the ordinary sense of that word.

Equality of the animals and man.

by which dogs exhibit preference for one puppy above another; it raises the question whether Montaigne's cat might not consider that he existed for her amusement, while he on no better grounds supposed her to exist for his. All which reflections and controversies, if they strike us as irrelevant, are perfectly germane to the matter in the mind of the author. For, on the whole, they suggest the doubt whether we are not an exceedingly presumptuous set of beings in fancying that we have any faculties at all higher than those which are given to the other animals; whether our boast of being able to reason and arrive at knowledge has any justification; whether the pursuit of truth may not be a pleasant and useful amusement rather than one which promises any result; whether, if we do attain any sublime or divine wisdom, it must not come in some miraculous way, by some gift on which no man can calculate; whether we may not make shift with what we have, not to go very far wrong in the business of life; whether religious forms and beliefs may not be serviceable for that business, and, therefore, may not deserve to be defended by such arguments as we can get for them; whether they do not become mischievous when they lead to conflicts and persecutions; whether a consideration of our folly and ignorance and uncertainty might not save us from the dogmatism which produces these. Such, we apprehend, was the kind of result, or no result, to which this kindly Bordeaux philosopher arrived. Evidently, we think, one specially adapted for gentlemen with comfortable means, leisure and humour for observing the world, dislike to engage in the battles of it; not one which can have much satisfaction for those whose call is to work and suffer; not one which reconciles us very well to the existence of this planet, or at least to our own unfortunate differences from the horses, elephants, and magpies, that have their habitation upon it.

General conclusion at which Montaigne arrives.

A philosophy for men of fortune, not for mankind.

Exceptions to the Jesuit uniformity.

23. The doctrine of Ramus, that every individual is a species, receives an unexpected confirmation from the history of two eminent men, juniors to him, but his contemporaries. If the maxim of Loyola had been realized fully, we might expect to find the members of his order differing from each other only in their talents and adaptation to circumstances, exactly alike in their characters and their principles. The vast moral superiority of Xavier to the ordinary European Jesuit might not be sufficient to confute this anticipation; for the circumstances of a new world, the high calling of bringing nations within the fold of Christ, might be likely to call forth all that was noblest in Loyola's conception—for awhile to keep down what was worst. A comparison between Mariana and Bellarmin brings out quite another kind of opposition, and shows that neither personal nor

national distinctions would be always extinguished by the all-embracing, all-killing principles of the society.

Bellarmin and Mariana.

24. They furnish particularly fortunate materials for this comparison. They were born within five years of each other, the Spaniard in 1537, the Italian in 1542. One was seventeen years of age, the other about eighteen, when he entered the Jesuit society. Each discovered abilities which might be most serviceable to the Order; each was ready to use them in obedience to the Order. Bellarmin, after being a highly admired and popular preacher in the different Italian cities, became the first Jesuit professor of theology at Louvain. Mariana was professing theology at Rome in 1561, and after spending two years in Sicily, expounded Aquinas at Paris in 1569. Bellarmin was summoned from Flanders by Gregory XIII., to be a teacher of controversy at Rome. He was sent by Gregory's successor to contend with the Protestants in France. They were theologians therefore, scholastic theologians and professors in the very same regions—in the two great ecclesiastical and scholastical centres of Europe. As little, it might be thought, of Spanish feeling could have remained in Mariana under such a discipline as of Italian in Bellarmin. The distinct qualities which each might have inherited from birth must have been effaced, one would have said, by their professional culture. When Mariana returned to his own country, from weakness of health, when Bellarmin became fixed in his, first as Archbishop of Capua, then as librarian of the Vatican, we might have predicted not merely that the Jesuit would be predominant in both, but that all traces of what was not derived from that vocation would be obliterated as much in one as in the other.

Resemblances in their circumstances.

Fame of Bellarmin among Protestants.

25. It was not so. The Jesuitism of Mariana is in one particular far more flagrant than that of Bellarmin. The Italian passes among Protestants as a highly respectable controversialist, who fought according to the rules made and provided for theological disputants—now and then, of course, taking unfair advantages—but, on the whole, his profession being to extinguish Calvinists, fulfilling the duties of it in a creditable, by no means barbarous, fashion. To Gallican Catholics he is more disagreeable. Bossuet complained, in the following century, that Bellarmin stood to the Roman see and its ultramontane defenders, in place of all the older traditions of the Church. Yet neither Protestants nor Gallicans allege that any outrageous moral crime can be traced to his exhortations. Both affirm that Ravaillac learnt his lesson from a book of Mariana's; that he was the express defender of the murder of kings who denied or undermined the faith. This charge has no justification from answers which were made by Ravaillac to the interrogatories of

And Gallicans.

Mariana accused of instigating the murder of Henry IV.

the court. He does not seem to have known anything of the book *De Rege et regis Institutione.* He had other teachers of the Order whose language was far more intelligible to him than Mariana's would have been. But that in this treatise there is a very manifest approbation of the previous act of Clement against Henry III., and a defence of the principle of tyrannicide, any reader may satisfy himself by turning to the sixth chapter of the first book. That a volume containing such a chapter should be burnt in France, after the death of Henry IV., can excite no surprise. If any literary offence deserves this fate, that deserved it. Nevertheless, we are not inclined to regard Mariana as the bad man which on such evidence we might be inclined to pronounce him. So far from looking upon him as a peculiarly malignant specimen of the Jesuit genus, we are inclined to feel more sympathy with him than with almost any man of that Order whom it has been our lot to converse with; because he does retain the features and the spirit of a man under his disguise; because he was a Spaniard—yes, and a Spanish patriot—even while he was supporting sentiments that undermine all patriotism; because he did love what was noble and true, even while he was setting his hand and seal to much that was utterly ignoble and false. The book *On the King, and on the Education of a King,* should be read along with Bellarmin's *On the Chief Pontiff.* We cannot help thinking that if they are impartially compared, the one will leave an impression of real warmth and heart on the reader, that the other will strike him as a piece of cold, clever, dreary sophistry. If we rise more sadly from the perusal of Mariana, it is because he has kindled hopes which the history of his country, guided by those priests to whom he would have committed it, has been doomed every generation more utterly to falsify. Bellarmin kindles no hope for Italy or for mankind; he compels us to feel that if the Church and the universe were to rest upon his principles and to be upheld by his arguments, they must be rather worse than they are.

Mariana a defender of tyrannicide.

Reasons for preferring him to Bellarmin.

26. These books introduce us to that side of moral and metaphysical history which, we have said already, was in the sixteenth century to eclipse partially, though by no means totally, that side of it with which Ramus was chiefly occupied. Aristotle the Logician was to supply professional controversialists, such as Bellarmin, with their weapons and modes of attack or defence; Aristotle the Politician was to supply them with their materials and their subject. When one hears that Bellarmin's subject was the Pope and the ecclesiastical government, such an assertion as this may sound absurd. What have questions about the keys; evidences that St. Peter was Bishop of Rome, and

Tertia controversia generalis, de summo Pontifice, quinque libris explicata. Opera, Bell., Tom. i., p. 490, Col. Agrip., 1620.

died there; confutations of all arguments, old and new, to the contrary; demonstrations that he must have left his powers to his successors in that seat and that those successors are not antichrists, as the Calvinists wickedly affirm, but are supreme judges in all controversies of faith and manners;—what, we say, has all this to do with a book written by the heathen tutor of Alexander the Great? To appreciate the full power and influence of the Greek philosophers generally, and of this philosopher specially, it should be understood that all the statements and arguments of Bellarmin, *the* champion of the hierarchy in that day, proceed from Aristotle's dogmas on the relative merits of monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, and their possible combinations; and that in fact the learned schoolman has scarcely anything to add out of the experience of 2,000 years in Christendom and Islamism to that which Aristotle obtained from the observation of half-a-dozen little republics, the monarchy of Persia, and that which had arisen in his own day to overthrow it. Literally all that Bellarmin can do is occasionally to pervert or exaggerate the sentiments of his master; to sustain them by a very indifferent and questionable collection of historical examples; to refute more recent objections to them; and then to raise upon them the theory of an ecclesiastical and universal state.

Bellarmin's treatise opens thus:—"Nemini dubium esse potest quin et potuerit et voluerit Salvator noster ecclesiam suam ea ratione et modo gubernari qui sit omnium optimus et utillissimus. Tres autem sunt formæ bonæ gubernationis.

. . . .

Docent hoc principes Philosophorum, p. 507.

27. Bellarmin considers that his first controversy with Calvin is on the question, whether monarchy, aristocracy, or democracy is in itself the better form of government. The Jesuit decides that of the three simple forms, monarchy is the best; that monarchy mixed with aristocracy and democracy is most desirable in the world generally, in consequence of the corruption of human nature; that in a government so arranged, monarchy must hold the first place, aristocracy the second, democracy the third; that excluding accidental circumstances, simple monarchy is the best and most perfect of all. These positions are defended by Greek, Roman, and Jewish authorities, by reason, and by experience. The arguments from this last source are worthy to be noted. The monarchy of the Assyrians from Ninus to Sardanapalus lasted either 1,240 or 1,400 years. The kingdom of the Scythians must have lasted some thousands of years. The Roman Empire lasted 1,495 years in the East; in the West, one must reckon all the 800 years since Charlemagne, in addition to those previous to the fall under Augustulus. With these periods, who can dare to compare the Roman republic, which only lasted 480 years, or the republic of Venice, which cannot boast at the most above 1,100 years, and which moreover has the merit of having no element of democracy in it? It would be very idle waste of time to quarrel with Bellarmin about his dates. The important

Si simplex aliqua forma regiminis necessario eligenda sit sine dubio eligendam esse Monarchiam. Cap. ii.

Cap. iii.

Cap. iv. Circumstantiis exclusis Monarchia simplex omnibus aliis formis absolute et simpliciter præstat.

Cap. ii., p. 514, beginning Hinc nimirum.

Bellarmin's measure of excellence in a government.

point to remember is, that duration, with this great champion of the Church, is the measure of worth, and that a Scythian kingdom, of which no one event can be recorded, which has preserved the record of no one man, is for him longer and worthy of greater reverence than the states which kept the memory of Assyria and Scythia from perishing; which produced the men from whom Bellarmin begs his philosophy, his arguments, no small portion of his Christianity; which produced the city of the popes, and the prototype of their government.

Difference between Bellarmin's politics and Aristotle's.

28. What strikes one most in this treatise, is the absolute slavery of the writer to those formal divisions with which Aristotle has furnished him—his utter inability to contemplate history and the world about him, except as exhibiting different instances of this school classification. With Aristotle those names were the names of things with which he had been himself conversant. Great as was his love for classification, he never forgot that Athens and Sparta had been the habitations of human living beings, that the order under which they lived was a real, not an artificial one, capable of being criticized in a book, because it had passed through a period of action and conflict. Here we have nothing but the *caput mortuum* of all that men have been doing and suffering for thousands of years. The more flat and dead the result, the more agreeable it is to our systematizer, the less it disturbs his equanimity. People who have remembered that Bellarmin was employed to teach controversies, and that, in fact, his whole existence was one of controversy, have sometimes wondered at a sentence which is reported to have been often on his lips, in itself a good and memorable one, "Verily, an ounce of peace is worth a pound of victory." But the peace of Bellarmin was of that kind which Galgacus declared the Roman peace always to be. Make the world empty of all that revolts against an absolute tyranny, and you have the precious ounce which he sought by tons of disputation to win.

The ounce and the pound.

Utrum autem expediret omnes provincias mundi ab uno summo rege gubernari in rebus politicis, quamvis id non sit necesse, possit esse quæstio. Mihi tamen omnino expedire videtur si possit eò pervenire sine injustitiâ et bellicis cladibus. Cap. ix, p. 542.

29. It will be seen that Bellarmin is advancing through these, which he would have called secular, propositions to his great argument, that such a monarchy as is lodged in the successors of St. Peter is the true government for the universal church. The question of course meets him: Would you have what you call the outward and secular government of the world under one head if you could? Would you prefer a universal empire to separate nations? We must do him the justice to say that he does not blink the question. He confesses that this would be his ideal of the world's order; only he says that it could not be realized except through great wars and slaughters. If there could be a universal empire with viceroys and satraps under it, as bishops are under the pope, that would be immensely prefer-

able to the existence of separate kingdoms. But the corruption of human nature interfering with this arrangement, nationality must be borne with. Bellarmin saw clearly enough that if the spiritual supremacy he loved could be maintained in its full and true proportions, the distinction of nations would become in due time quite imaginary. And since he did not desire for the pope more than an indirect temporal authority, the ecclesiastical unity under him would of course develop an imperial unity. The blessed consummation for mankind would of course be when the head of each would perfectly understand the other; no nation would then open its mouth or peep; the beautiful ideals of the old time in Scythia, Assyria, Rome, would be recovered and realized by the vicar of Christ.

See Book v.

Ecclesiastical and imperial tyranny producing and sustaining each other.

The Scriptural antagonist of Bellarmin.

30. Whether a pure Calvinist replying to Bellarmin would have been able to show cause why the Roman or Greek republics should be preferred to the Scythian or Assyrian empires, is a doubtful question. At least he will have felt—if he could not put his feeling into words, or could only put it into very uncouth words—that the Lord God reigning over the nation of Israel was maintaining a fight against the huge colossal empires of the earth; and that if He was reigning still, He had not set up a church in imitation of them, and did not mean to establish one of them over the bodies and properties of men. Mariana, the brother Jesuit of Bellarmin, the lecturer on Aquinas at Paris, had not learned *that* lesson; but he seems to have learned after his return into Spain, that which made him much more than a mere disciple either of Aquinas or Loyola. With whatever motives he may have undertaken the study and the elucidation of Spanish history, however he may have hoped that his labours would serve the cause of the priesthood generally and prove the necessity of his own order, there was something in the pursuit itself, something in the memories with which it surrounded him, something in the light which it received from the hills and valleys of his birth, which scattered many of the school mists wherein he had become naturalized, and changed him into another man. Mariana did not brood for nothing over the chivalrous traditions of the heroic age of Spain, or over the struggles of Juntas and grandees with their rulers in later times. All passed into his soul, and finding seeds of quite another kind which had been planted there in his early years, displaced some of them, gave the others a different quality. The profound question of casuistry respecting the lawfulness of assassination for the overruling interests of the Church, mingled strangely in his mind with thoughts of Harmodius and of Brutus. Recollections of Padilla crossed him, when he should have been occupied with the Exercises or the Institute. Why should not

Transition to Mariana.

Conversion of a school-man into a historian and a man.

Jesuitism becoming national.

the Jesuit order be a great instrument for asserting the rights of the people, for warning righteous sovereigns, and putting down the evil? No doubt, among those evil sovereigns must especially be reckoned the Lutheran princes of Germany, the heretic Queen of England. But it was in the character of oppressors of the faith, that even these presented themselves to him. He would strike at them as much with the feelings of a Roman republican as of a sixteenth century Romanist. Mariana seems to us like one who, having acquired a premature senility in his youth under the Jesuit discipline, became almost a boy in his declining years. The worth of justice, freedom, truth in words and deeds, burst upon him with what must have been the strangest and most delightful surprise; even while he was not consciously departing from any of his old maxims, and was pleading for the same unity which Bellarmin pleaded for, with ten times his vivacity and boldness.

De Rege et Regis Institutione. Moguntiæ, 1605.

Liber I. Proœmium. Pp. 1-13.

Cap. i. Homo naturâ est animal sociabile. Pp. 12-18.

Cap. ii. & iii., pp. 18-37.

P. 24.

31. Mariana begins his dedication to Philip III., the Catholic King of Spain, by informing him that there is a place beautifully situated, and which has been the parent of great wits, called by other names in old times, but in his, Talavera. As Englishmen in the nineteenth century may prefer to receive the description of that place from Napier or Southey, we omit the pretty picture which the Spaniard gives of it, though not uninteresting, as showing that he really enjoyed nature and loved the home of his childhood. Nor must we be detained by the agreeable circle of friends whom he collects about him, since the conversation in which they engage is only an introduction to a discourse which the historian reads to them, and which is avowedly intended for the prince. Beginning from the beginning, Mariana lays it down that men are formed for society, and that all their wants and cravings, and their struggles to obtain the food which seems to offer itself spontaneously to the animals, are intended to make them aware of their dependence upon each other, and of their need of order and government. In proceeding to discuss the question whether it is better that one or more should reign, Mariana is encountered by difficulties which never occurred to Bellarmin; for Ninus, Cyrus, Alexander, and Cæsar, the founders of great empires, are in his judgment not legitimate kings, but rather robbers and tyrants. What is said in the Scriptures about the sin of the Israelites in choosing a king, is accepted as a proof that there are conditions of society in which monarchy is not desirable. And though Mariana arrives at last, by sober considerations of experience, at the conclusion, that a king, and an hereditary king, is good for separate nations, one of his main arguments for the superiority of monarchy is, that the corruption of it (tyranny) is of all kinds of rule the most detestable.

His dislike to imperial government is evidently at the root of his preference for family succession; his reasons for it are deduced much more from the history of nations, and especially of Spain, than from any abstract considerations. In the fifth chapter of this book, the difference between the king and the tyrant is strikingly and vividly brought out. Then follow the fatal passages which have brought so much merited odium on Mariana. Though in this chapter he very obviously sympathizes with those who take the matter into their own hands, and slay irreligious kings at the risk of their lives, it is clear that a strong notion of the responsibility of kings to organized bodies of their subjects representing the will of the nation, was combined with this ecclesiastical admiration of the individual zealot. In the eighth chapter, the superiority of the state to the king is distinctly affirmed, and affirmed moreover upon high church grounds. Mariana evidently suspected more peril to the priestly order from sovereigns and their advisers, than from a cortes or a parliament. He seems to have considered that the priests, if they understood their own interests, would be constitutional. On more general and less professional grounds, he affirms in the ninth chapter that the prince is subject to the laws. In the tenth, the Jesuit appears again; but still the Jesuit Spaniard, the Jesuit historian. Kings must not dare, like those vile sovereigns of England, to meddle with religion; for if they do, there may be as many opinions about it as there are different races in the world. The king is to reverence the priest as his best and safest adviser, especially because he has no children who may lead him to forget the public weal in his domestic interests and anxieties; Mariana, with his usual boldness, alleging the employment of eunuchs by eastern sovereigns as a wise and godly precedent for the sovereigns of Christendom.

Cap. 5.
Discrimen regis et tyranni.
P. 43.
Cap. vi.
An tyrannum opprimere fas sit.

Cap. viii.
Reipublicæ an Regis major potestas sit.
P. 68.

Cap. ix.
Princips non est solutus legibus.

Cap. x.
De religione nihil Princeps statuat.

P. 90.

32. Of all subjects, that of the second book might sound most alarming to those who remember that the school was one of the three instruments by which the Jesuit Order proposed to mould and govern the world. It is on the education of a prince, and opens with an essay on the education of boys generally, beginning from the nurse. Strange to say, it is the part of the work in which there is least of the mere sacerdotal feeling, most of what is high and manly. The body of the prince is to be trained to all vigorous exercises. Everything that is likely to make him weak, cowardly, effeminate, is to be kept from him. He is to read the best authors. Tacitus especially is to be continually and earnestly pondered, that he may learn to dislike the tricks of princes, and the frauds of the palace. He is to be a scholar, but not entangle himself with the subtleties of grammar and logic. He is to converse with learned men, and reverence them;

Liber 2.

Cap. i.
De Puerorum institutione.
Cap. ii.
De nutricibus.
Pp. 99-115.
Cap. iii.
De primâ Principis institutione.
Cap. iv.

Cap. vi.
De Litteris.

Cap. vii. & viii. De Musica et aliis artibus. Cap. xvi. De Mendacio. Pp. 163-169. Cap. xxiv. De Religione. P. 202. Liber 3.

only study is to be the minister of action, and not the hinderer of it. Music holds the same place in Mariana's judgment as in Plato's; it is to harmonize, not to soften; he is to learn through it what force there is in laws, what blessedness in an order of life, what sweetness in the temperance and government of the soul. The prince is to be trained to eloquence, because he rules freemen and not slaves, to whom he is to explain, so far as he can, his purposes, and whose wills he is to draw after him. He is to study dialectics, only because it may help him to detect and expose sophistry, and to discover the truth. He is to cultivate arithmetic and geometry, as much for their moral as their directly practical uses. He is to study the principles of taxation, general and particular economics, the condition of other countries, above all—Mariana repeats himself often upon this point—*let him grow old in the reading of histories, wherein he will discern the beginnings, middles, and downfalls of tyrants.* What is most satisfactory of all, Mariana answers at large the arguments of those who plead for dissimulation as a princely quality, affirming that his prince should be trained to regard lying as the most unroyal and base of all vices. Even in the chapter which is specially on religion, there are many valuable cautions against the prince being allowed to acquire a superstitious habit of mind, one which would lead him to neglect his duties as a sovereign, or to break treaties and covenants under pretence of serving God: "Whereof," he says, "a notable example was furnished by one who, at the advice of a certain hermit, attacked the Moors during a truce, and perished for his treachery."

Cap. i. De Magistratibus. Cap. ii. De Episcopis.

33. The third book opens with a chapter on magistrates, which passes into one upon bishops. With respect to these last, he considers that the royal responsibility is great, because their influence is so good or so evil, and because once made it is not in the power of the sovereign to remove them. He prefers theologians to canonists. He regrets that bishops have been sought more for their craft or knowledge of the world than for higher reasons. "Lizards become green," he says, "from living in the grass; bishops must become litigious and worldly who are always occupied with suits and secular business." Mariana is as strong as any administrative reformer of modern days against the selection of men for offices or honours on account of birth or connection. He would not even allow distinctions of country in that vast empire on which the sun did not set. "Let there be no kind of honour," he says, "no reward, to which access is prohibited to any man, be he Spaniard, Italian, Sicilian, or Belgian. Let the monarch embrace all with equal benevolence; let him clothe them with the same honours! So will he

Cap. iv. De honoribus et præmiis. P. 239.

have numerous, yea, innumerable champions of his authority, whose consenting wills and united forces no sudden violence of fortune, no invasion of enemies, will weaken at any time: so that an empire established in righteousness, and sustained by the affection of its subjects, may be established for ever, and spread to the ends of the earth." On war, on taxes, on the coining of money, on buildings, above all, on legal judgments, and the higher justice which ought to rule in the breast of the king, our author speaks with equal freedom and boldness, generally also with sound common sense. He is severe on theatrical spectacles, yet even of them he writes more in the spirit of a severe Spanish patriot than of a monk. It is not till we come to the seventeenth chapter, whereof the title is "That there may be many religions in one province, is not true," that we discover the establishment of a dead uniformity of belief, to be, after all, the highest object which Mariana's prince can propose to himself. Hitherto we might boldly say, that if our Spaniard had proposed to himself the task of instructing Philip III. how best and most entirely he might depart from all the maxims which had governed the life and conduct of Philip II., he could not have executed his task more elaborately or successfully. Now at last we arrive at the maxim which lay at the ground of Philip's life, the one which enabled him to regard himself, in spite of lies, adulteries, murders—nay because he did not scruple to commit them—as the most Catholic of sovereigns. Mariana's book is one to be treasured and remembered, because the history of the country which he loved has shown that every great object which his better and truer mind recognized as the object of government, must be sacrificed if his ecclesiastical theory which has been so faithfully acted upon is to prevail.

Cap. v. De re militari.

Cap. vii. De Vectigalibus.

Cap. xi. De Judiciis.

Cap. xvi. De Spectaculis.

Cap. xvii. Multas in unâ provinciâ esse religiones non est verum. Pp. 352-372.

34. That kingdom, which in Mariana's dream was to encourage the activities of its subjects in all the countries which were under its sway, made its heavy hand felt in crushing the life and energy of each one of those countries. None groaned more under its yoke than Naples; the sombre Spaniard seemed more uncongenial to the southern Italian than even his German masters or his French allies. One of the former, Frederick II., had been in truth far more a Sicilian than a German, and had laid the foundation of a culture in Naples which had awakened some of those tendencies and aspirations that the Spaniard found most troublesome. This great foe of the Popes had established an academy in Naples which was vigorous in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and conspired, with the other influences that were at work then, to promote scholarship and counteract scholasticism. Another academy, which arose in this century, had a different object, but contributed more effectually to the same

Influence of Spain upon Naples.

The Literary Academy there.

The Academy of Costanza.

Bernardino Telesio.

Bernardini Telessii, de rerum Natura juxta propria principia libri ix., 1588. In the same volume with P. Mocenici Veneti Contemplationes and Andræ Aretini Questiones Peripateticæ.

The error of students in substituting their reasons for the facts.

Object and method of Telesio.

Adversaries and protectors of Telesio.

result. It was the precursor of our Royal Society, and of all the other institutions here and elsewhere which make physical science their principal pursuit. It is associated with the name of a very eminent man, Bernardino Telesio, one of those few whom Bacon exempts from his sweeping and arrogant condemnation of the students of nature previous to himself. How well he deserved that honour from a preacher of experiment may be judged from the argument of the first of two books which he published in 1565: "That the construction of the world, and the magnitude and nature of the bodies contained in it, is not to be sought after by reasoning, as men in former times have done, but to be perceived by sense, and to be ascertained from the things themselves." This statement he illustrates in a short preface:—"Those who before us have investigated the construction of the world, and the nature of the things contained in it, have no doubt consumed long watchings and mighty labours in that task; nevertheless they appear never to have found what they were searching for. For what can have been made known by those whose discourses about these matters were not less discordant with the things than with themselves? This misfortune, I apprehend, befell them, because trusting too much in their own wit, they never looked fairly at the things themselves and their powers, and so never ascribed to them that magnitude and mind and faculties with which they are endued. But, as if they were fighting with God to prove their wisdom greater than His, they have dared by mere ratiocination to divine the causes and principles of the universe, and have thought themselves at liberty to invent what they did not find, thus making a world by their will. . . . . We, not confiding so much in ourselves, and being furnished with a slower wit and a less vigorous spirit, being, however, lovers and cultivators of human wisdom—which ought to attain its very highest point if it looks thoroughly into the things which the senses have unfolded, or into the things which can be understood by their likeness to those that are perceived by the senses—have determined to examine the world and its several parts, and the passions, actions, operations, and appearances of those parts. For those parts, rightly examined, will each reveal its own magnitude; and those passions, actions, operations will manifest the mind, power, and nature of the things. So that if there should turn out to be nothing divine, or admirable, or very acute in our studies, yet these will at all events never contradict the things or themselves, seeing that we only use our sense to follow Nature, which is ever at harmony with herself, and is ever the same in her acts and operations." Such a passage as this, which is almost a literal anticipation of some of the early maxims in the *Novum*

Organum, might well alarm the schoolmen of Italy and Spain, and demand the intervention of that power which was to preserve unity of faith in one region as much as in another. Telesio had much to suffer for his anti-Aristotelian principles; but he was fortunate enough to secure the friendship and protection of Pius IV. That pontiff even offered the archbishopric of Cosenza to Telesio, and when he had the wisdom to refuse, gave it to his brother. There seems to have been a special mildness, modesty, and devotion about the man, which, though it could not disarm the doctors, might make a mere churchman hope that he was not dangerous. As usual, the Holy See bent ultimately to the more infallible judgment of the schools, and Clement VIII., in 1596, placed the books of the then departed philosopher, the friend of his predecessor, in the *index expurgatorius*. Of course, this act furnished one testimony—and there is abundance of others—to the influence of the writings of Telesio in different parts of Italy.

Books proscribed after his death.

Transition to Giordano Bruno.

35. In a treatise of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, we have no business to notice further a book so exclusively physical as the one to which we have just alluded; though at the commencement of the Baconian period it is necessary to repeat an observation which we have often made before, that a method of physical study has the profoundest interest for the metaphysician; indeed, must involve the very principle and meaning of the subject with which he is occupied. A striking illustration of that remark is furnished by a countryman and an admirer of Telesio, the most interesting figure among the Italian thinkers of this century, perhaps of any century—a man whose life and writings form one of the many tragedies in philosophical history, and might point a thousand morals, adorn a thousand tales, if the facts did not contain a deeper moral as well as a livelier romance than even a great artist could extract from them. Giordano Bruno belongs emphatically to the south of Italy, nor can one imagine him born in any age but exactly that one to which he belonged. He fills up the whole period between 1550 and 1600. He brings together, in strange proximity, the impressive, passionate admirer of beauty with the monk of the strictest order—the dramatist, poet, satirist, with the investigator of nature—the lover of Italy with the voluntary wanderer in every land which was most unlike his own—the earnest man with the trifler—the man whose words and acts would often have been a justification of his enemies, with the man whom they justified, pronouncing in their sentence upon him the most tremendous sentence upon themselves.

Interest of his life and thoughts.

Bruno a Dominican

36. Giordano Bruno, we have observed, became a monk of a

severe order. That description would not apply to the Jesuits; we can hardly imagine what the effects of *their* discipline would have been upon such a mind. It is only one degree less difficult to understand how he can of his own accord have become a Dominican; for there is no ground to suppose that either force or influence was used to make him one. His biographers can only conjecture that if he felt no vocation for arms or for law, some kind of religious life was all that was left to him.* He appears to have had a strange apprehension that his profession might give him greater leisure or greater freedom (perhaps he confounded the two words, as so many have done) for literary or scientific pursuits. Such a perversion of the intentions of the founder may have parallels enough in Protestant as well as in Catholic countries; but it generally brings its punishment. Bruno's began early, and did not leave him till his death. The notion has prevailed that he exposed himself to severe censures in his convent for speaking sceptically about the change of the elements in the Eucharist. On that point, or on a number of others, his speculations may have come in contact with the doctrines of which the Dominicans were the traditional champions. It is not necessary to speculate how a strife arose, which was sure to grow wider and ultimately irremediable. The speedy effect of it was that Bruno became a fugitive from the land which he regarded as the most celestial in the world, and that the seeds of strong belief and strong doubt which had been planted in him at Nola ripened and bore fruit under different skies.

See M. Bartholomèss Jordano Bruno. Tome I., p. 36-40.

Bruno's journeys.

37. The travels of Bruno are in the strictest sense philosophical travels. His object was to visit those places in which there were the most celebrated universities; he was anxious, like Pico and the academic knight-errants of the fifteenth century, to establish his prowess in conflict with the doctors of one and of another. He had, however, a real desire to sympathize with any who could exchange thoughts with him; even a desire—in spite of a very satisfactory opinion of himself, which he takes not the slightest trouble to disguise—to learn from them. He was possessed with some negative and some positive convictions. The Aristotelian method, he was sure, was leading to no results: Telesio had taught him that. But Copernicus,

Joint influences of Copernicus, and of Telesio on his mind.

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* One would be glad to imagine that he was attracted to the order of preachers by an admiration of Savonarola. But if (as M. Bartholomèss supposes) he received a strong influence from the Florentine school and its traditions, he would probably have been inclined to regard the prophet with suspicion as an enemy of the classical and Platonical movement. The motives which led Savonarola into the cloister were as opposite as possible to those which, confessedly, acted on Bruno. Nor was there any such fervent Italian patriotism, apart from the desire of philosophical freedom, in the Neapolitan as could account for his taking a political reformer as his model.

who died about ten years before his birth, had convinced him not only that Aristotle's conception of the universe was wrong, but that the opposing one,—that which struck all ordinary observers as monstrous, that which outraged every dogma of the schools—was right. The two maxims, though they supported one another, had no natural sympathy. If he had strictly followed Telesio, Bruno would have been, as we have seen, more a disciple of sense, less of reason, than the ordinary doctors. Copernicus seemed to have taken the highest and most daring flight beyond the world of sense, nay, to have mocked and defied the senses. Herein lay no small part of his attraction for the young Dominican adventurer. He liked the Telesian doctrine so far as it raised him above the quiddities of the schools and brought him into contact with actual nature; but he was not born for a quiet crawling investigator of facts, moving only one step at a time. The Copernican idea delighted him as an idea. It justified itself to his deepest reason by its consistency and harmony. He loved it the better because the vulgar were necessarily opposed to it; he loved it still more because it set him directly at war with the whole body of Peripatetics in all the academies of Europe. Their arguments against it he could strike through with a logic subtler than their own; their angry appeals to tradition and authority he could meet with the most provoking ridicule. He could oppose his Italian courtesy, as he often tells us, to their coarse behaviour. He could turn from them to the accomplished gentlemen of their land, to men who, like Lorenzo, understood good breeding, and longed to mingle philosophy with letters.

His controversy with the age.

Bruno a man of the world.

38. For Bruno, though a Dominican by profession and a student by taste, does not in his heart prefer the school to the court. Grace and beauty of every kind speak to his soul, and exercise a dominion over him which one would fear must have often been too much for his judgment and his loftier aspirations. His countenance testifies how mightily he must have been attracted, and how many he must have attracted. His wit, too, was often too powerful for him. In the gravest discussions it carried him beyond all reasonable limits. That it seriously injures his philosophy, we do not believe; his philosophy could not have existed without it. It entered into the heart of his speculations, and gave them much of their form and peculiar character—comic and tragic could not be separated in his dialogues more than in a play of Shakespeare. But it cannot be denied that he would have been more of a man if he had been able to govern the faculty better. He was a child of nature rather than a voluntary responsible being. The wonder is that one so impulsive, so open at

His wit.

His observation of life.

every pore to outward influences, had so much of internal life, and so much devotion to truth. And those temptations which were most perilous to Bruno himself make his travels more interesting for us. He records his observations not only upon the proceedings of doctors, but of human beings of all classes, in the countries which he visits. He may sometimes affect the cosmopolitan, but it is satisfactory to find that he is always at heart an Italian, and looks at all persons and things with Italian eyes.

Geneva. See M. Bartholomess, Vol. i., Leo. 2, et 3.

Paris.

Bruno no follower of Ramus.

A disciple of Lully.

Secondary motives for his admiration.

39. Whether Bruno ever seriously expected to find a welcome at Geneva, whether his revolt against the doctrines of his order went so far as to make him hopeful of a refuge among the formal adversaries of Catholicism, we cannot determine. It appears that he went to the city of Beza, who must, of course, have been immeasurably less inclined to fraternize with him than with Ramus. No climate can have well been more uncongenial to the Neapolitan than this. He will have left it with the feeling that he could breath even a close Catholic atmosphere with less difficulty than the keen and cutting air of Calvinism. It was natural that one whose main business lay among universities should have directed his next steps to Paris. There he had not to begin the war against Aristotle; the sage had already been attacked in some of his strongest holds. But Bruno's mind was not cast in the same mould as that of Ramus; he was not in the least inclined to take up the conflict where the author of the "Animadversions" had left it. It was the physics not the logic which excited Bruno's wrath. Still he was quite aware that he must assail the method of the great ruler of the schools if he wished to undermine his scheme of the universe. With all his enthusiasm he was not deficient in prudence. If he could not follow the guidance of a recent Parisian teacher, he would profit by the fame and labours of an earlier one, rather than appear to be merely importing transalpine opinions. The wonderful art of our old friend Raymond Lully commended itself to the imagination and sympathy of the Neapolitan. To him, as to its author, it could not seem a mere scheme for assisting the memory, except so far as the memory was the mother of all arts, that in man which connected him with the past, present, and future, that which linked his thoughts and conceptions to the Infinite and Eternal. We do not doubt that Bruno became most cordially and passionately a Lullist; had it not been so, he could not have devoted the greater part of his Latin works to the illustration of the art. But without impeaching his sincerity, we may believe that he was first attracted towards it by the desire to discover some standing ground from which he could effectually assail Aristotle in the University of Paris,

without becoming the copyist of Ramus. In many respects he chose his ground skilfully and well. At least a traditional Lullyism must have remained in that University for which it was first devised. Mediæval restorations and resuscitations might then, as now, have a charm for Frenchmen. And Bruno could not be sorry to counteract the impression of heresy, which he knew attached itself to every impugner of the Stagyrite, by associating himself with so very earnest a Christian as Lully—with one, too, who discovered in the existing School philosophy Mohammedan tendencies, and who regarded his own system as a bulwark of the faith. With all his philosophical pride, and his scorn of the vulgar, Bruno cannot have been insensible to these considerations. Nevertheless, it would appear that his revolt against the Catholic faith must have gone too far to make any such alliances with religious men in past ages of much avail. He was permitted to lecture and dispute in the university; he might have been made one of the ordinary professors if he had not refused to attend Mass. Such a refusal had not excluded Ramus from his chair; but *he* had openly professed Calvinism at a moment when it was tolerated. For a Dominican to take the same course, implied that he was standing very loose to any religious profession. It implied, also, we are bound to add, that he was much more scrupulous than many philosophers before and since his time have been, of affecting an outward conformity to that which his heart did not recognize. His courage in this particular did not hinder him from gaining eager listeners to his expositions of the Lullian doctrine, nor from acquiring the favour and patronage of Henry III. The Italian propensities of the monarch seem to have overweighed his dread of the priests. And Bruno, who could set them at defiance, expressed his gratitude to the unworthy monarch in language which it is painful to read, and which we might denounce as odious adulation, if we did not remember the sins of other philosophers not far removed from the age of Henry III., and bearing English, not Italian names.

Orthodoxy of Lully.

Bruno's revolt against the Church.

Patronage of Henry III.

40. Bruno was twice in Paris—once lecturing on Lully's method, at a later time openly denouncing Aristotle's physics. The interval between the two visits was filled up by a sojourn in England. The greatest philosophical works of Bruno—those which he wrote in his own language—were composed here, and are mixed with more curious and lively observations respecting our Queen, our nobles, our ladies, our doctors, our shopkeepers, our police, and our people generally, than are to be found in almost any documents of the time. Bruno was the guest of Fulke Greville. In his company he of course learnt to know and admire Sydney. Both inspired him with an admiration,

Bruno in England. Opere di Giordano Bruno Nolano, Da Adolfo Wagner. Lipsia, 1830.

His companions.

which he can scarcely find words to express, for Elizabeth. The English of her sex seem to him divine. So far our vanity has all possible consolations from the philosopher of Nola. But there are terrible deductions, which, on the whole, leave us in a tolerably fair condition for judging his books on their own merits, students—especially if they belong to Oxford—certainly with rather strong motives to detect and expose their weakness. For he looks upon our population generally, including country gentlemen, yeomen, tradesmen, innkeepers, boatmen, as the most ill-bred savages he has ever met with. He makes the discovery, which is the more bitter and cruel for being announced in a dedication to his great friend the French Ambassador, that ours is a "country in which merchants being without conscience and faith, rise easily to the state of Crœsus, and in which Virtuosi, being without gold, practise without difficulty the virtues of Diogenes." Such extremely hard hits—one of which, at least, will be felt as not altogether unfair by a number of poets and artists in later centuries—might be borne, if Bruno would have confessed the scholars and teachers of our universities to be worthy representatives of the Elizabethan era. But, alas! we find a number of disagreeable allusions—such as we should gladly suppose were intended for Germany—to the beer-drinking propensities of the Oxford under-graduates, and to the hopeless pedantry and stupidity of their seniors. We trust that much of Bruno's account of his argument at Oxford, respecting the Copernican System, is a caricature, and that the English defender of Ptolemy did not talk all the nonsense, or betray the rudeness, which is attributed to him. There is, it must be confessed, a certain verisimilitude in the description which testifies to great artistical power in the narrator, if it had no counterpart in reality. Since, however, the Nolan had the advantage of representing his own case, and since, in the nineteenth century, a verdict has been pronounced in his favour, we may not do justice to the supporters of a then triumphant system.

See pp. 146-149.

Dove i mercanti senza conscienza e fede son facilmente Cresi, e li virtuosi senz'oro non son difficilmente Diogeni, p. 122.

Bruno on the universities, doctors, and students.

41. The work which contains these comments upon England is called *La Cena de le Ceneri;* or, *An Ash-Wednesday Feast*, held after sunset at the house of Fulke Greville. The book consists of five dialogues between Smitho, an Englishman, Teofilo, a philosopher, Prudentio, a pedant, and Frulla, a saucy personage, who is chiefly employed in making jests upon the philosopher and philologer. Thus, in the beginning of the dialogue, Teofilo lays down the law on dualism: "All things are in twos. There are the Pythagorean co-ordinates, viz., the Finite and the Infinite, the curve and the straight, the right and the left. There are two species of numbers, the equal and the unequal. There are two great vital acts, Knowledge and Affection. There

Opere, pp. 112-200.

P. 124.

are two objects of these, the True and the Good. There are two principal essentials of things, Matter and Form. There are two primary opposites, the Hot and the Cold. There are two primary parents of natural things, the Sun and the Earth." Frulla is immediately ready with *her* binary scale:—"The beasts entered the ark by twos and twos. There are two animals made in the likeness of man, the ape upon earth, the owl in heaven. There are two kinds of asses, the wild and the domestic. There are two opposing colours, the gray and the blackamoor; two sacred Florentine relics, the teeth of Sacetto and the beard of Pietruccia,"—with more of the like kind. Which remarks, our reader will easily understand, are not the least intended to undermine the doctrine of Teofilo, which is Bruno's own, but only to prove that he can say cleverer things against himself than his opponents can invent. The dialogue goes on with great seriousness, after some objections of Prudentio to the title of *dialogue* where four persons were discoursing had been disposed of, and after Bruno has invoked the Muses of England, whom he has seen—and whom he much prefers to those of Helicon, whom he has not seen—to inspire him with a discourse on the merits of Copernicus. On him Teofilo pours forth his praise, as a man of grave, laborious, anxious, and mature mind, inferior to no astronomer that had lived; too much given to mathematics, too little to nature; unable, therefore, to answer all objections to his system, and to tear up the vain principles of his adversaries by the roots; but, nevertheless, entitled to all admiration for his defiance of the foolish multitude, and for standing firm against the current of the opposing creed. Thence Teofilo proceeds to mention (as modestly as may be, yet maintaining his right to praise a friend) how well *il Nolano* has filled up the blanks which Copernicus could not supply, and has drawn off the veils which had hidden nature from the eyes of man; nay, if they will use them, has provided eyes for the moles, light for the blind. In the course of this first dialogue, Bruno introduces a sentiment which we are in the habit of attributing to Bacon, though it may possibly be much older than either. Prudentio having quoted the words, "in antiquity is wisdom," Teofilo begs him not to leave out the latter half of the sentence, "and in the multitude of years is prudence;" and he goes on to affirm that we are much older, and have a much longer experience to boast of than our predecessors.

High life below stairs.

The invocation.

P. 137.

P. 129.

P. 132.
Voglio dire che noi siamo piu vecchi et abbiamo piu lunga eta che i nostri predecessori.

42. We must not indulge ourselves by recording the London adventures, of which we have a most lively account in the second dialogue, nor even the five propositions of the Doctor Nundinio and his friend Torquato, at the great Oxford gathering, which form the subject of the third. The fourth is curious, as it con-

Dial. Sec., p. 137-151.
Dial. 3, p. 151-183.

tains an argument on the apparent divergency from the Mosaic story which is involved in the Copernican theory. The objection is treated neither better nor worse than it has commonly been treated in later times; the answer of Teofilo being, that in a book written for moral ends, precision respecting natural questions, and a departure from ordinary popular methods of speech, would be idle pedantry. The reason, however sound and true in itself, does not exhaust the subject, at least for Englishmen, who can hardly contemplate it exactly from Bruno's point of view. When he is speaking of the information which is imparted in Scripture, he says,—"If the *gods* had chosen to give us accurate statements on these subjects, of course I should have accepted them as above my own reasonings; but they have not." We quote the language because it is characteristic, and because it throws, we think, much light upon the mind from which it proceeded. The Neo-Platonical school in the third century reconciled, it will be remembered, the old mythology with their own acknowledgment of a transcendent unity, by supposing that the divine and absolute Being, whom only philosophers could apprehend or have any communion with, had manifested portions of his nature through secondary divinities; so not excluding the vulgar from the benefit of his government, and such kind of knowledge as was desirable for their well-doing and for the peace of society. A faith surely not confined to them, or ending with the decree by which Justinian closed their schools. Under different aspects, and in different modifications, it had been adopted into the system and practice of Christendom; and a host of demigods, called in the new dialect, Saints, or the Virgins of different localities, had been accepted as partial representatives of a Mind which to sinful people was unapproachable; how much oftener as barriers between them and that Mind, as mediators to hinder His wrath from bursting forth upon them! Bruno, trained in this religion, and afterwards seeking a refuge from its vagueness and confusion in philosophy, not unnaturally betook himself to the school of Plotinus, and learned there both the ultimate end that he should pursue, and how easy it was to translate back the phrases of Christianity into the phrases of Paganism. Almost unconsciously, without the least sense that he was contradicting the letter and spirit of the books upon which he was commenting, he referred the Hebrew Scriptures to *the gods.* If they did their work of providing a suitable morality for the wants of the people, it could not be expected that they should care for exact truth about the laws of nature. Immediately after, he speaks of *The Legislator*, meaning of course Moses. Had he alluded *only* to him, he would have been in nearer conformity with the modern Neologian; he would have referred

Molte volte dunque et a molte propositi è una cosa da stolto et ignorante piu tosto riferir le cose secondo la verità che secondo l'occasione e comodità' p. 178.

The secondary divinities of the philosophers,

And of the Church.

Pagan-Christian ideas transferred to the Hebrew books.

the whole Jewish economy, and the book which describes it, to human wit and contrivance. It was not in accordance with the spirit of the time or of the man to do that.* He was living in a supernatural atmosphere from which he had no desire to escape. He was not seeking a more material, but a more transcendent, explanation of the difficulties which he saw around him. He preferred Plato to Aristotle, Copernicus to Ptolemy. Not from any compliance with customary orthodoxy, but from his own conviction, he spoke of the Book of Genesis as divine. But "divine" meant something very different in his dialect and in that of the people with whom he was holding his supper. They might tolerate deviations from scientific accuracy when natural phenomena were described in a book which they regarded as divine. But it would be because they felt truth to be *more* intimately connected with morals than with physics; because they supposed that somehow—they might be very ill able to express how—that which related to the life of man must be more strictly right than that which related to the life of nature. Such, we apprehend, must have been the inward belief of Greville and of Sydney, though it may have had much to struggle with, both in the diplomatic habits of their time, which made the doings of men often seem very irreconcilable with the standard of truth, and in that passion for physical studies which was soon to display itself with great vigour on our soil. At all events, there was enough of real earnestness in Bruno, even apart from his graceful Italian manners and humour and the Italian rage of the time, to make these scholar-like gentlemen, these pursuers of a high ideal, exceedingly charmed by his discourse—their Protestant convictions and their English habits of mind notwithstanding.

Italian and English feeling.

Bruno's charms for English gentlemen.

43. We must not linger over the last dialogue of this supper, but must proceed to a treatise more specially concerning our subject, "On Cause, Beginning, Unity." The two works are connected. The scene is still England. The preliminary dialogue turns upon the complaints which the sneers against the Oxford Doctors in the supper had called forth. In a sort of half-apology, Bruno lets us see that he disliked the pedantry of the philologers, the so-called humanists, even more than that of the philosophers of the old Aristotelian type, and that he still prefers the English women and Queen Elizabeth, even

Opere, vol. i. 201-292. De la Causa Principio et Uno.

Bruno's hatred of pedants.

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* It should be mentioned, that Bruno finds the philosophy of Copernicus "much favoured" in many passages of the Book of Job, which he describes as "one of the most singular that can be read, full of all good theology, physics, and morality, abounding in most wise discourses, united by Moses as a sacrament to the books of his Law." Here he seems to think that Moses has stored up the true natural science, which would have been out of place in the Book of Genesis.—P. 174

on intellectual grounds, to those who wear the University gown. There is much of light sparring in this dialogue, and many good anecdotes, specially to expose the Ciceronian and antiquarian word-worshippers of the day. A friar, who could not preach P. 225. on the text "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," without giving an elaborate account of all the coins that circulated in the Roman empire, their weights and their equivalents in Tuscan money, is for him a specimen of the class. Bruno's own apparent trifling is therefore directed against triflers; he wishes to clear the ground of them that he may advance to the very grave subjects of his discourse. A countryman of ours, called in mellifluous Tuscan *Alessandro* *Dicsono*, a pedant *Poliinnio* (that, we are told, being the fashionable orthography for Polyhymnio), and *Gervasio*, who is present at the conference because he has nothing better to do, and whose vocation is to call out the absurdities of his learned companion, are the parties in this conversation. As soon as Dixon enters, we plunge at once into the subject which is indicated by the title of the book.

The Dramatis Personæ.

Influence of Bruno's Copernican belief on his general belief.

44. As we are now come to the very heart of those convictions—not perhaps which brought capital censure upon Bruno in his own age, but which have stamped him with the name of Pantheist in subsequent ages—we ought to consider carefully what his standing-ground was, and especially how his physical and metaphysical conclusions were related to each other. We ought to remember how very gradually the truth of the Copernican doctrine burst upon our countrymen; what quiet, cautious, tentative intellects prepared the way for it; how the ground for it was laid in painful experiments and laborious mathematical reasonings; how eminently unpoetical and unimaginative was the age which accepted it; how speedily it associated itself in the mind of that age with mechanical discoveries and commercial advantages. Notwithstanding all this preliminary discipline, and these accompanying circumstances, the new belief was the cause of a greater revolution in the minds of men occupied with political and material interests, educated for a century and a half in Protestantism, than we are wont to imagine. Conceive, then, what the effect of it must have been on an Italian Dominican, full of passion and poetry, born in an age which was seeking for unity by methods which seemed utterly hopeless, or hopeful only so far as they crushed all thought and reason, himself sharing the feelings and impulses of that age, and sharing also its despair. Conceive him suddenly transported, not by a dream, but by an assurance, that that which Aristotle and all the ancients had deemed to be the centre of the universe, was not the centre of it; that that which appeared to be stable was moving; that that which seemed to be moving was stable.

Why it could not produce the same effects when it was received here.

It is easy to say, that these are mere physical facts; that they do not affect human beings in their relations to the spiritual world; that all which concerns faith and duty remains just as it was before. Bruno actually does say this. We heard how sharply he drew the distinction in his dialogue at the supper; he draws it even more strongly in this dialogue. He declares solemnly that he interferes with no moral or theological principles. To the first Cause or Principle, in the theological and moral sense, he cannot ascend. He accepts the dogma, that on these subjects we are only to take just what it pleases the superior powers to make known; that a man is most ambitious and presumptuous who asks a reason for that which is communicated. If this is orthodoxy, no one is so thoroughly orthodox as Bruno; no one more willingly surrenders to the priests that which he supposes is theirs. We do not think he was insincere in these professions. It would be exceedingly difficult for the divines of any communion in our day, to say how they could have been made more complete or satisfactory. And yet it is evident to us—it must have been partly evident to Bruno himself—that to maintain this division between the provinces with which he did, and with which he did not, concern himself, he must uphold those scholastical barriers which he was breaking down; artificial lines, terms, definitions, must still rule Heaven and earth. That first principle which Bruno thought he had found by an investigation of nature, would be to him *the* first principle of all. He would always suspect that that which he conceded to the theologians was indeed necessary for the purposes of life and must be presented to the vulgar, but had not the same claim to be called *true* as that which was professedly below it and was discovered merely by the human faculty. This contradiction is perpetually besetting Bruno. But from his efforts to escape it, from the necessity under which he felt himself to associate other ideas than any which he could find in nature with his natural principle, from the sublimity of some of his thoughts, from the feebleness of others, moralists and theologians might, it seems to us, have learned more than from many speculations of their own—certainly they might have found more evidence in support of a truth which is not physical, than they could obtain by burning the books or their author.

Pp. 233 & 234. See especially the passage beginning "Sarà dunque bene d'astenerci da parlar de si alta materia."

Difficulty of the distinction which he endeavoured to draw.

Benefit from the exhibition of that difficulty.

45. From the hints we have given, our readers will easily conclude that our Copernico-Dominican can find no solution for the mystery of the universe but in the old belief of a soul in the world. Nor need we tell those who have known that doctrine in its earlier forms, that to distinguish this soul from a god is all but impossible for the subtlest intellects. That Bruno escaped the peril better than Greek or Brahminical philosophers had

The Anima Mundi.

done, we do not affirm. The return to such an opinion, after so many centuries had been resting in one which seemed to be the opposite of it, might make the Pantheism sound even more decided than it had ever been. Yet the difference was practically very great. The Christendom ages had not existed for nothing. Their influence rested upon Bruno unconsciously and consciously. He could not have shaken it off if he would; he would not if he could. The religious atmosphere of his own age he often felt, and had a right to feel, was close and stifling. Fresher breezes came from the fields of the past, which even when he was most struggling against traditions, he would have been sorry to lose.

Dialogue 2, p. 234.

Grandi animali ed eccellentissimi numi

Cause and principle; wherein different.

Method of the discourse.

46. The duty of abstaining from these transcendental and moral considerations being admitted, Bruno proceeds to affirm that the duty of investigating the Principle and Cause which is to be discovered in nature itself, is not less imperative. He declares that those "magnificent stars and shining bodies, which are so many inhabited worlds, and grand living creatures, and excellent divinities," could not be what they are—could not have any permanent relation to each other—if there were not some cause or principle which they set forth in their operations, and "the infinite excellence and majesty of which they with innumerable voices proclaim." These expressions—"grand living creatures," "excellent divinities"—the reader must not regard as merely rhetorical. He is not, however, bound to condemn them as heretical; the author must be allowed to give his own exposition of them. He is asked at starting, by Dixon, to state wherein *principle*, according to him, differs from *cause*. He answers, that a *principle* is that which concurs intrinsically in the constitution of anything, and remains present in the effect. *Cause*, on the other hand, is that which concurs in the production of things exteriorally, and has its being independently of their composition. Dixon proposes that the *cause* should be investigated first. It is settled that they should begin with the *efficient* cause—should go on to the *formal* cause—should come, then, to the *final*.

Efficient cause, p. 235. Or quanto a la causa effectrice dico, &c.

The governing Intellect in the soul of the world.

47. What is the efficient cause? "I affirm," says Teofilo, "the physical universal Efficient to be the universal Intellect, which is the primary and principal faculty of the Soul of the world, that soul being, on the other hand, the universal form of this Intellect." "This is that one which fills the great whole, which illuminates the universe, which directs nature to produce its species in the way which is most suitable. So that it has the same relation to the production of *natural* things as our intellect has to the corresponding production of *rational* species." He goes on to connect this moving and formative Intellect with the

doctrine of Plato, of the Magians, of Empedocles, of Plotinus. That which they would respectively call the Fabricator of the world, the Impregnator, the Distinguisher, the Father or Progenitor, he would call the Internal Artificer, seeing it forms the matter and the figure from within: from within the seed or the root it gives forth and unfolds the stem; from within the stem it forces out the boughs; from within the boughs it forms the branches; from within these it pushes out the buds; from within, it forms, shapes, and interlaces, as with nerves, the leaves, the flowers, the fruits; and from within, at appointed times, it recalls its moisture from the leaves and fruits to the branches, from the branches to the boughs, from the boughs to the stem, from the stem to the root." He traces a corresponding method of production in the animals; compares the manufacture of dead things, which nevertheless we must attribute to intellect, with these wonderful living operations; and then lays down the proposition, that there are three sorts of Intellect—the divine, which is a whole; this mundane, which makes the whole; the other, or particular intellects, which constitute a whole. Between the extremes, he says, there must be some middle, which is the true efficient cause, not so much an extrinsic as an intrinsic cause of all natural things. From the efficient cause we proceed to the formal. The analogy is here, as always, to human art. All thinkers, Aristotle among them, had recognized not only an artist, but a *form* in the mind of the artist, which afterwards finds its expression in the marble or on the canvas. Bruno applies this to the universe. "And there are," he says, "two sorts of forms—the one, which is *Cause* (not the efficient cause, but that by which the efficient effectuates); the other is *Principle*, which by the efficient is called forth from matter." The first, our readers will perceive, is the form before it comes forth from the mind of the artist; the second, the form *in* the statue or picture which he creates. And then, says Dixon, winding up this part of the subject, the scope or the final cause which is set before the efficient, is the perfection of the universe; which perfection consists in this, that in different portions of the matter all the forms should have actual existence. In which result the Intellect has such delight and complacency, that it is ever exerting itself in calling forth all kinds of forms from the matter. Teofilo adds, that the final cause corresponds to the efficient cause; that as the first is universal in the universe, and is special and particular in the parts and members thereof, so also is the other.

P. 236.
Questo e nomato da' Platonici fabbro del mondo, &c.

Da noi si chiama artefice interno, &c.

Similmente ne gli animali, &c.

P. 236-7.
Son tre sorte d' intelletto; il divino ch'è tutto; questo mondano che fa tutto; gli altri particolari che si fanno tutto.

The Formal Cause, p. 237

The Cause in the mind, the Principle in the work; both *forms*.

The object and the result.

48. We now come to the *Principle*, or that which is implied in the constitution of everything that is. Can this be separated from the cause in fact, as easily as it can in definition? Bruno admits that it cannot. It is with the soul of the world as

P. 237-239.
Or per venire a li principi constituvi de le cose.

with the soul of man. "The soul is in the body as the pilot in the ship; which pilot, in so far forth as he is moved together with the ship, is part thereof; considered as the director and mover of it, he is not a part of it, but is a distinct efficient." Dixon assents to this proposition, even admitting that whatever is affirmed of the relation of the soul to the body in man, may be affirmed, *a fortiori*, of the relation between the soul of the world and that which it informs, seeing that the impediments which prevent the rightful supremacy of the superior principle in the one case are absent in the other. Nor does he revolt at the next proposition, which, indeed, is implied in the former, that those detract from the Divine bounty and excellence who will not acknowledge that the world, with its members, is an animated substance. This, in some general sense, he acknowledges to be the opinion of all the most eminent philosophers, even among the Peripatetics. But he demurs to what strikes him as the extravagant development of this doctrine by Teofilo. Does he mean that not only *the* form of the universe, but all the *forms* whatsoever of natural things are animated? Teofilo admits that he cannot stop short of this conclusion. He holds that all things whatever have in them a vital principle. What! exclaims Poliinnio, you think my slippers, my boots, my spurs, my ring, and my cloak are animated? Why not? asks Gervasio. When you wear that cloak, is there not an animal within the cloak? Do not your boots contain living feet? The pedant is greatly offended by this vulgar solution of a philosophical puzzle, and demands a learned reason for Teofilo's faith. He answers—"I admit that the table as table is not animated, nor the garment as garment, nor the skin as skin; yet, as natural and composite things, they have in them matter and form. Be the thing, then, as little as it may, it has in it a portion of spiritual substance, which, if it finds the fitting subject, may develop itself into a plant, into an animal—may acquire the members of any kind of body which in its totality is called animated; seeing that spirit is found in all things, and there is not the smallest corpuscle which does not contain within it that which animates it." "You would make me think," says Dixon, "the opinion of Anaxagoras probable, who held that everything is in each thing, seeing that spirit, or life, or universal form being in the whole mass of things, from a whole a whole may be produced." "That doctrine," says Teofilo, "I look upon not as probable, but as true. And if so, not only is life found in all things, but the soul is that which is the substantial form of all things: it presides over the matter, it holds its lordship in those things that are compounded; it effectuates the composition and consistency of their parts. This I understand

Con maggior facilità l'anima del mondo regge l'universo, che' l'anima nostra il corpo nostro, &c., p. 238.

Atteso non è filosofo di qualche riputazione, anco tra i Peripatetici, che non voglia, il mondo e le sue sfere essere in qualche mode animata, p. 239.

P. 240. Dunque i miei calopodi le mie planelle, &c.

P. 241. Dico dunque che la tavola come tavola, &c.

P. 241.

Non dico verisimile ma vero.

to be the one in all things which, however, according to the diversity of the dispositions of matter, and according to the faculty of the material principles, active and passive, produces diverse configurations, and works out diverse faculties; one while showing the effect of life without sense, one while the effect of life and sense without intellect, one while how it may have all the faculties kept down and repressed either by the imbecility or by some other condition of the matter. Whatever changes, then, of place or shape anything may undergo, it cannot cease to be; the spiritual substance being not less present in it than the material. The exterior forms alone are altered and annulled, because they are not things, but only appertain to things—are not substances, but the accidents and circumstances of substances." We cannot withhold the next passage of the discourse. "The Sophists say that that is truly man which is the result of composition; that that is truly soul which is either the perfection and act of a living body or the result of a certain symmetry of complexion and members. Wherefore it is no marvel if they regard with such terror death and dissolution, seeing therein the overthrow of their being. Against which folly nature cries with a loud voice, affirming that neither bodies nor souls ought to fear death, seeing that matter and form are both most constant principles."

P. 242.

The permanence of the universe.

P. 243. Diceno quelle essere veramente uomo, &c.

Body and soul have each an immortality.

49. We pass over a very interesting passage, in which Teofilo responds to a scholastical question of Poliinnio, how the soul of the world is everywhere a whole if it is an individual? and also to a vulgar question of Gervasio, who supposed material largeness to be the proper type of universality; that we may come to the third dialogue, in some respects, we think, the most important for the understanding of Bruno's position, and of his relation to the philosophy which was current in his day. From the sentences we last quoted, it will be evident that he does not disparage matter, as some spiritual philosophers are inclined to do. He claims immortality for the body as well as the soul, because matter and form are both constitutive principles in everything that exists. In this dialogue he confesses that there was a time in his life when he was inclined to the Democritic or Epicurean doctrine, that matter is the substance of things, that forms are nothing else but certain accidental dispositions of matter. Such an opinion was very natural to a man who was passing, by the help of Telesio, out of the Aristotelian dogmas. But he says that after mature consideration, he had returned to the old belief that it was necessary to recognize in nature two kinds of substance, the formal and the material, "seeing that there must be an active potency and a passive potency in the universe; a power to make and a power to be made." Dixon

P. 245. *Velim scire quomodo forma est anima mundi ubique tota* se la è individua? &c.

P. 251. Et io multo tempo sono stato assai aderente a questo parere, solo per questo, che ha fondamenti piu correspondenti à la natura che quei di Aristotele. &c.

P. 252. Galen and Paracelsus.

Di grazia Teofilo, prima fatemi questo piacere a me, che non sono tanto pratico in filosofia, dichiaratemi che cosa intendete per questo nom *Materia?*

The material of the artist has its analogy in nature.

P. 253. Sense and Reason.

Application of the analogy of the operations of art to those of nature.

Non vedete poi, &c. P. 253

Method of dismissing opponents who deny

hints at the possibility of considering matter as the whole body of things, distinguishing it not from the form but only from the efficient. Teofilo answers that such a mode of considering the subject is tempting to a physician who blends a little philosophy with his medical and chemical studies, and so confuses both, as he supposes Galen did; but that he thinks that the aim of Paracelsus to make medicine subordinate to philosophy was a higher aim; at all events, philosophers must not be bound by the empiricism of the medical doctor. The question, What then is matter? must be fairly encountered. It is put into the mouth of Gervasio, that the answer to it may be more simple and adapted to the common understanding. Teofilo explains to him that every artificer has some subject upon which he works: the carpenter, wood; the blacksmith, iron; the tailor, cloth. All these arts produce different figures and shapes in their own proper material, no one of which shapes and figures belongs to it in itself, or would otherwise be assumed by it. Just in like manner, nature demands a matter for its operations, seeing that it is impossible that there should be any agent, who, if he wishes to make anything whatsoever, should not have that whereof to make it, or if he wishes to work, that whereupon to work. Of course Gervasio is reminded that the materials of the artist have already a form which has been given them by nature, whereas the matter upon which nature works must be without form. He then demands whether it is possible to have the same kind of knowledge of the subject of nature as we have of the subjects of the different arts. The answer is, that the knowledge may be as real, but that the organs of cognition must be different. He has no difficulty in conjecturing that an eye of sense is the organ for apprehending the one, an eye of reason for apprehending the other; but he does not perceive clearly how this rational eye is to be exercised. He is taught to observe the analogy between artificial operations and natural operations: just as out of the trunk of a tree the carpenter fashions a beam, a table, a bench; so out of that which was seed, comes grass; out of that which was grass, comes the ear of corn; from the ear of corn, bread; from bread, chyle; from chyle, blood, and so on. Well, then, the reason demands a subject which is none of these things that is unfolded out of it, in the one region as well as in the other. And our inability to see that subject does not in the least interfere with this necessity. But what am I to do, asks Gervasio, if I am talking with a person who will not admit this to be so? Simply wish him good morning, and make him no answer, was the solution of this difficulty. And if he should still be importunate? rejoins the querist. Then, said Teofilo, you must address him thus: "Most illustrious Signor, or sacred

Majesty, as the case may be, as there are certain things which cannot be evident except to the hand and to the touch, other things except to the hearing, other things except to the taste, other things except to the eyes, so this material of natural things can only be evident to the intellect." But, suggests the modest Gervasio, my friend may reply, that he has much more intellect than I have. There is that danger, no doubt, is the answer, just as a blind man may assure you that it is you who have lost your sight. You may believe him or not as you like. The main question of the dialogue, however, is not with the champions of sense, but with the champions of logic. The notions of form and matter which prevail among the Aristotelians, are the great hindrances, Teofilo thinks, to any clear and vital apprehensions of the truth. All the *substantial forms* of the Peripatetics, he cries, consist in nothing else but a certain combination and order of accidents, and of that for which they can find names; while their *primary matter* is nothing else but an accident, a habit of quality, a principle of definition, a quiddity. Then, striking at the very heart of the controversies which occupied us so much in our former part, he says, that owing to this confusion between things and names, certain subtle metaphysicians in cowls, that they might excuse the impotency of their divinity Aristotle, are continually playing fast and loose with the terms Humanity, Bovinity, Socrateity. And if you ask them, In what consists the essential being of Socrates? they would answer, in Socrateity. If you further demand, What do you understand by Socrateity? They would answer, the proper substantial form, and the proper matter in Socrates. Then, if you say, Let us throw over this substance in so far forth as it is material, what is the substance in so far forth as it is Form? Some would answer, his soul. Then, you further ask, and what is this soul? If they shall say, an entelechy or perfection of a body which may live; observe that the soul is then represented as an accident of body. If they should say, it is a principle of life, sense, vegetation, and intellect, though that language admits a true sense, it has not that sense in their use of it; the soul is still with them not fundamental but accidental; body is assumed as the ground of it. The confusion, he says, is still more evident when you question them about the substantial form of an inanimate thing, *e. g.*, wood. They can never go beyond "ligneity." So that at last, some logical intention is always put as the principle of natural things.

Facts not cognizable by the senses.

P. 255.

Consistono non in altro che in certa complessione et ordine d'accidenti, &c.

Humanity, Bovinity, Socrateity.

In che consiste l'essere sustanziale di Socrate? responderanno "ne la Socrateità."

The soul never anything but a condition of the body with Aristotelians.

Logical terms at the bottom of everything.

50. Here, no doubt, Bruno has hit the scholastics on their weak point. It was a succession of such blows as these that made them reel, and stagger, and fall. Regarding them, no doubt, as his most formidable and dangerous enemies, he speaks

Tolerance of the physical schools.

See pp. 258, 259.

P. 260. Hanno dette molte cose buone gli Epicurei.

The intellect of Anaxagoras

charitably of different schools of philosophers, who have really striven to investigate nature, even if they have missed the truth at which he thinks he has been permitted to arrive. "Philosophers may start," he says, "from very different points. The Epicureans have said many good things, though they did not ascend above the qualities of matter. Heraclitus has given admirable hints, though he could recognize nothing but a soul. Anaxagoras does not fail to make profitable researches into nature, merely because he wished to recognize an intellect, not only within it, but without it, and perhaps above it; that Intellect which is called by Socrates, Plato, Trismegistus, and our theologians, God." We introduce this last sentence because inferences might be drawn from it which Bruno would have pronounced to be unfair. He does not complain of Anaxagoras for recognizing an intellect out of nature, and above it; he only observes that his observations *in* nature were distinct from this recognition. He adheres to his previous statement, that theological principles must not be mixed with natural principles. At the same time he bears an unconscious testimony to the fact, that the most physical of the old philosophers were driven in their search of a principle beyond nature; and he justifies the conviction of Socrates, that his highest illumination came to him when he quitted the school of Anaxagoras, and exchanged natural for human studies.

Matter and form, how related to each other. P. 260.

The active and passive potency.

P. 261. Or contempla il primo et ottimo principio, il qual è tutto quel che può essere, et lui medesimo non sarebbe tutto, se non potesse essere tutto, &c.

51. But to return. We are still in search of an answer to the question, What is the material principle? How is it related to the formal principle? Matter, Teofilo says, may be considered in two ways, as a potency and as a subject. He does not agree with the philosophers who look upon it merely as a potency. For them matter belongs to the intelligible rather than to the sensible world. Still he is willing to contemplate it first in that character. So taken, it is ordinarily divided into *active* potency and *passive* potency. One of these, he says, necessarily involves the other; indeed, at last they must have the very same meaning, unless you reverse the meaning of potency, and suppose passive potency to be impotency. Take potency in any other sense than this paradoxical one, and no philosopher, no theologian, would hesitate to attribute it to the primary supernatural principle. But this first and highest principle would not be all, if it had not in itself the potency to be all. In it, then, act and potency are the same thing. It is not so, he continues, in other things, which whatever they are, have a possibility of being something else than they are, even of not being that which they are. A man is that which he has the possibility of being, but he is not all which he has the possibility of being. The stone is not all that it has the possibility of being; it has the possibility of becoming a vase, or of becoming dust. *The* principle

includes in itself all being, and all possibility of being; its own being comprehends every being. It is all that which is, and has the power of being whatever other thing it would be. Every potency then, and act, which in *the* principle is complicated, united, one, is in other things explicated, dispersed, and multiplied. The universe itself is described by most august titles; nothing is wanting to it in matter or form. But it is not all that it may be, through the same differences, modes, properties, individuals. It is but a shadow of the primary act and the primary potency. In it act and potency are not absolutely the same thing. The Principle of the universe alone is without difference and distinction, all which is and all which can be. What, say you, then, asks Dixon, of death, corruption, vices, monsters? Will you admit these to have a place in the great whole which is the same in act and potency? These, Teofilo answers, are not act and potency, but defect and impotency. They are found in divided things, which are not all that they have the potency of being, and are forcing themselves into that which they may be. It being impossible for them to be at one and the same moment many things, they lose the one being in order to have the other—sometimes confound the one being with the other—so are dwarfed, maimed, dislocated. He proceeds with great eloquence to speak of the first absolute principle, as containing in itself all greatness, the highest and the lowest, the indivisible, and that which is of every measure. It does not lose its greatness by being the least; it does not cease to be the least by being the greatest. It is beyond all equality, because it is all that which it can be. What is said of greatness, applies equally to goodness and to beauty. It is all the goodness which can be, all the beauty which can be. It is evident that Bruno has here unconsciously transgressed the limits which he prescribed for himself. He cannot speak of goodness—hardly of beauty—without passing into a moral region. And therefore we cannot be surprised to find him, at the end of this paragraph, on the very heights of Old Testament as well as New Testament theology; quoting, as applicable to his subject, the words addressed to Moses in the bush, and the words which the exile in Patmos heard behind him, "I am the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last."

The potency of the principle different from every other potency.

He calls it "il gran Simulacro la grande imagine, e Punigenita Natura," P. 261.

Vices and defects, their relation to the whole.

P. 262. Non è maggiore per esse minima, &c.

Passage into Theology.

See p. 263.

52. We have now given our readers a hint of the way by which Bruno ascends to that unity, the knowledge of which, he declares, is the scope and boundary of all philosophies and all natural contemplations, leaving, he still adds, within its own limits that highest contemplation which mounts above all nature. We should be bestowing more space than we have a right to bestow upon a single author if we followed him through the windings of the fourth dialogue, which contains, however, many

The fourth Dialogue. See pp. 265-279.

Summary.

P. 280-292. The fifth Dialogue, E' dunque l' Universo uno, infinito immobile, &c.

P. 283. Plurality subordinate to Unity.

Difference and number accidental.

Death only alteration.

Wisdom, Truth, Unity, the same.

interesting developments of his doctrine respecting matter, and certain justifications of his idea of unity, which would, perhaps, make it appear less startling to some readers, more perilous to others. As an eloquent summary of all that is most sublime as well as most Pantheistic in his philosophy, we would recommend them to consider the opening of the fifth dialogue. It commences with the words—"The universe then is one, infinite, immovable. One, I say, is the absolute possibility, one the act, one the form or soul, one the matter or body, one the being," &c. And it concludes thus—"Within the one infinite and immovable which is substance—which is being—is found multitude, is found number. Yet all the modes and multiformity of being, whereby we are enabled to distinguish thing from thing, does not cause the being itself to be more than one. For if we reflect earnestly with the natural philosophers, leaving the logicians to their own fancies, we shall find that whatever causes difference or number is mere accident, mere figure, mere combination. Every production, of whatever sort it be, is an alteration; the substance ever remaining the same: for that is only one, one being, divine, immortal. Pythagoras was able to understand, that instead of fearing death, he need only contemplate a change. All philosophers, commonly called physical, have perceived the same truth when they say that in respect of substance there is neither generation nor corruption, unless under these names we mean to signify alteration. Solomon understood this when he said that there was no new thing under the sun, but that which is has been already. Understand, then, that all things are in the universe, and the universe in all things; we in that, that in us; and so all meets in one perfect unity. See, then, how vain a thing it is to torment the spirit with anxieties; see how impossible it is that there should be anything about us of which we ought to be fearful. For this unity is alone and stable, and ever remaineth. This One is eternal. Every appearance, every other thing is vanity, is as it were nothing; yea, all that is nothing which is outside of this One. Those philosophers have found again their mistress Sophia, who have found this Unity. Indeed, wisdom, truth, unity, is the same."

Bruno not a Platonist.

P. 286. Voglio dire, che il fine de la sua filosofia era più la propria gloria, che la verità.

53. Although Aristotle is the philosopher of whom Bruno speaks most bitterly in this dialogue, as elsewhere, we must not hastily describe him as a Platonist. His admiration of Plato was very partial, and would have been quite unsatisfactory to the Italian school of the previous century. He speaks of him as failing to improve on Pythagoras, because he set himself up as his master, when he would have been far wiser if he had been content to be his disciple. He even commits the injustice of saying that Plato sought his own glory rather than truth. In him, as in Bacon, there is a manifest tendency to magnify the

Come divinamente notò il Cusano. p. 288.

Bruno not a disciple of Cusa.

Influence of England upon him.

earlier Greeks above those who followed Socrates, of course because they were more physical, less logical, and also—we must say it—less human. Among the moderns Bruno, alluding to the doctrine that the least and greatest meet in the One, expresses a high admiration for Nicolaus of Cusa. That the earliest and bravest rebel against the logical tyranny, at least among cultivated and learned men, should command the sympathies of an insurgent in later and more hopeful times, can excite no surprise. But there is not enough in Bruno's language, as we think, to justify the opinion of Sir William Hamilton,* that Bruno learnt any considerable part of his philosophy from Cusa. He had none of the passion for mathematics which belonged to the German. The Socratic humility of the Cardinal might please him, in contrast with the insolent dogmatism of the Aristotelians; but it had no natural affinity with his own mind, which had always a tendency to be haughty and presumptuous. Raymond Lully, Telesio, and Copernicus exercised a direct and acknowledged influence over his mind; the other was collateral and accidental. But, in speaking of a character so susceptible of all influences as Bruno's, so sympathetic in the midst of its self-confidence, the biographer ought not to pass over any of the books, or persons, or places which manifestly acted upon him. For this reason we have departed a little from our usual course, that we might connect two of the books which Bruno wrote in England with his residence under the roof of Castelnuovo, and with all the inspiration which he was deriving from the hospitality of Sydney and Greville, from the more distant and awful attraction of the Sovereign, from the smiles of the fair, and the opposition of the doctors. These, quite as much as the writings of any philosophers, contributed, it is evident, to form his mind and direct his speculations. The by-play in these dialogues, which in general we have been obliged to overlook, but which is an integral part of them, and often contains the best commentary upon the graver passages, is sufficient evidence of this fact. The dialogues *De*

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* See the Catena of authorities on the limits of human knowledge to the conditional, in Sir W. Hamilton's *Discussions*, p. 601. Certainly a melancholy composition to be indorsed by such a name! The quotations, torn from their roots, and from all which makes them intelligible in the works of good, bad, and indifferent writers, must have been collected by some industrious and rather dull pupil, with the help of tolerable indexes. The erudite teacher appears, in the one instance to which allusion is made in the text, that he may explain that Cusa (the title of whose book had probably tempted the unwary journeyman) was not a safe guide, and might suggest a conclusion the very opposite to the true one. No doubt it was prudent and necessary to extinguish a man who, besides his other enormities, had a great belief in Mathematics. But might not the object have been accomplished without an appeal to the *odium theologicum*; an orthodox Cardinal of the fifteenth century being made responsible for the offences of a Pantheist of the sixteenth?

His other works.

l' Infinito Universo e Mondi, belong also to our soil, are dedicated to the same patron, and carry on the same argument. But we must leave these, as well as the *Bestia Trionfante*, and other illustrations of his genius and his errors, that we may return to the tragedy of his life and death.

Bruno at Wittemberg.

54. We have remarked that the journeys of Bruno were specially to university towns. After leaving England he went to Germany; in 1586 we find him at Wittenberg. He was received with a cordiality which led him to regard the home of Luther with very different feelings from those which Oxford had awakened in him. It was not that he found himself in the one place more than in the other amongst Copernicans. But the Reformation in England had been political in the nation, philological in the schools. In Germany it had begun with an assault upon Aristotle. If he had in a great degree recovered his influence, the tradition of the old hostility remained. Bruno was listened to with respect; he revived a former conviction; he brought new arguments and a vehement Italian eloquence to justify it. In a valedictory address, he acknowledged with genuine gratitude the free spirit of the Wittenbergers. Ascribing it to its right source, he expressed such admiration for Luther, as a man less occupied with the stars, more thoughtful of his own probable future upon earth, might have been sure would be remembered against him.* From this university Bruno proceeded

Panegyric on Luther.

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* We are so much indebted to M. C. Bartholomèss for his lively and interesting work on the life and writings of Giordano Bruno, and especially for the light he has thrown upon the condition of the universities and countries which he visited, that we regret the more two singularly perverse conclusions which he has indorsed with his authority. One has reference to Bruno's stay at Wittenberg. M. Bartholomèss leaves the impression on his reader's mind—he almost affirms in words—that the liberality with which the Nolan was treated there was due to the reaction of Melanchthon against Luther's early hatred of philosophy as anti-Pauline. How plausible the opinion is, our readers who are aware of the language which Luther used whilst he was condemned to be a lecturer on Aristotle, will easily perceive. How untenable it is, they may judge from two simple reflections:—(1.) It supposes a vehement impugner of Aristotle to be tolerated *because* Melanchthon had re-established the worship of Aristotle in that school. (2.) It contradicts Bruno's express testimony, that the liberty of thought, by which he was profiting, had its origin in Luther, and demanded the profoundest homage to his memory. The other error of M. Bartholomèss concerns our own history. Speaking of the Puritans of the reign of Elizabeth, he says, in an unfortunate note, "*No Bishop, no King, etait leur mot d'ordre*," p. 126. Is it necessary to tell a countryman of M. Guizot that he has mistaken entirely the meaning of the phrase he has quoted—that it does not mean "Down with Bishops and Kings," but "If there is no Bishop there will be no King!" that in that sense it was used by James I. at the Hampton Court controversy, expressly to confound the Puritan divines; that the majority of them in England and Scotland were attempting for half-a-century to disprove the maxim in his meaning of it; that the most desperate experiment for that purpose was made when Charles Stuart was chosen, after his father's death, to reign in Edinburgh by the grace of the Presbytery?

Prague. **Rudolph—Kepler.** **Bruno a tutor.**

to that of Huss; but he had no motive for glorifying the earlier Reformer as he had done the later. He would reasonably regard the triumph of Catholicism at Prague as more favourable to science than the triumph of its opponents could have been. The Emperor Rudolph II., who resided there, was a patron, though a capricious and superstitious one, of astronomy and astronomers. He was heard of then, if not seen, by a man whom, we trust, he would have preferred to all Emperors; from whom he might have learnt more on his special subject than from all the men and books he had ever known. A dialogue between Kepler, the German sage, and the eager Italian speculator, would have been worth listening to. In the University of Helmstadt Bruno experienced a repetition of his usual fortune. Always popular with princes, nearly always hated by priests and doctors, he became the tutor of the son of the Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, and was excommunicated by the chief of the clergy there. When his pupil reigned in his father's stead, Bruno could appeal to his attachment and celebrate his virtues. But he had uttered words in a consolatory address on the death of the elder Duke which were scarcely less imprudent than his eulogy upon Luther, and which helped to swell the list of his transgressions.

His return to Italy. **In Venice.** **His treatment there.** **The Inquisitor demands his body.**

55. They had been well and carefully noted when Bruno had the madness to revisit Italy. To Padua, as one of the chief of its university towns, he first bent his steps. His proceedings there are not well known; he was probably obliged to fly: he took refuge in Venice, perhaps trusting in the opposition which it had often made to the claims of the Holy See, and to the protection which it had occasionally afforded to suspected philosophers. But, as M. Bartholomèss well points out, the political motives which set Venice and Rome in continual hostility were the worst possible grounds for confidence to a man in Bruno's position. It might be the interest of the Republic to defy the temporal authority of the Pope. For the sake of that defiance it might now and then terrify him by harbouring a man of dangerous opinions: just as probably, it would bargain for the success of its own objects by the sacrifice of an insignificant victim, who, except for some purpose of refined state-craft, would have been as little agreeable to the ruler of one city as of the other. There was a prison which the Venetians granted for the special service of the Inquisition, though the Council of Ten still retained its own dominion over the prisoners. Into this prison Bruno was thrown in September, 1592. The Grand Inquisitor at Rome was immediately informed of the arrest; he solemnly demanded Bruno's surrender from the Venetian government. The following reasons were assigned:—The prisoner is a confirmed heretic; he has openly praised the Queen of Eng-

land and other heretic princes; he has written various treatises, in which he undermines religion and the faith, though he disguises his doctrine in philosophical language. As he belongs to the Dominican Order, he is an apostate. He has lived many years in Geneva and in England; he has been prosecuted at Naples and elsewhere for the like crimes.

A prisoner for six years.

Carried to Rome.

The Pope's disposition.

Efforts for his conversion.

His difficulties.

56. The Ten would have been more merciful to Bruno if they had acceded at once to this demand: his sufferings would then have been speedily at an end. But, either for the purpose of asserting their own dignity and independence, or (it has been suggested) through the influence of Father Paul—possibly, also, through the intervention of foreign ambassadors—they dallied with the Roman ecclesiastics, gave them a keener thirst for the blood of their victim, and kept him lingering for six years in one of their own dungeons. The confinement must have been a very strict one; for a man, to whom speech had become a kind of necessity, does not seem, during all that time, to have given vent, by word or letter, to the thoughts which must have been possessing him. He must have longed, one would suppose, for the moment when the compassion of his secular judges should cease, and they should deliver him to those gentle rulers who always petitioned that not a drop of blood should be shed. In 1598, that wish—if it were his wish—was granted him. San-Severino, the Roman Inquisitor, obtained the prize he had so long asked for—obtained it at a moment which was the most propitious for his object. Clement VIII. had struggled long with the Jesuits—had been the protector of men whom they looked upon as dangerous and criminal philosophers—had recurred to the divinity of Augustine as a protection against them. In his old age he had given over the hard battle. The Order had, as usual, triumphed over the infallibility which it undertook to uphold; Bellarmin really ruled in the College of Cardinals. The "ounce of peace" was to be got by fair means, if possible, but it was to be got; Bruno was one of the hindrances to that invaluable possession. As soon as he was transported to the care of the Inquisitor at Rome, all possible means were used for his conversion. He was visited by all the illustrious doctors; Bellarmin did not grudge his own valuable time in such a cause; it is even intimated that Clement VIII. tried entreaties, which may have been more moving, because more gracious and less logical. One can hardly conceive a position more cruel than that of Bruno, when exposed to such assaults. He had a firm belief in some truths, but they were not those, one would have thought, which could best sustain his own being, or even in which he could feel that the interests of his kind were directly involved. He had taken great pains to

distinguish between the principle for which he was contending and any moral or theological principle; he had done so with evident honesty at a time when he was exposing himself to no risks, either present or prospective. What pretext is there for accusing him of insincerity, if he endeavoured to explain to those who were questioning him about his faith, that he did not mean all which they supposed him to mean; and if the next day he made them feel that he did mean something which he could not unsay to please any.one? And yet we can well understand how a skilful and hard logician like Bellarmin, utterly incapable of entering into the thoughts which had filled the whole soul of the prisoner, should be able to produce clenching syllogisms and goring dilemmas from which there was no escape, and should then be able to represent to his own conscience and to the College of Cardinals, that Bruno was always doubling and retracting his own concessions to avoid the justice of the Holy office. We can conceive how such statements, repeated and gaining force month after month, should at length have convinced him, and even the Pope, that they had been only too merciful and long-suffering; that the time was come when they must show before all Europe how little the name of philosophy should avail to protect opinions which the schools—not the church—had condemned.

Exposed to the charge of quibbling though essentially honest.

The issue.

57. Accordingly, on the 9th of February, 1600, this great demonstration was made. In the presence of all the illustrious men who administered the affairs of the Church and the State in Rome, Bruno was brought out of his prison, and heard on his knees the sentence of degradation and excommunication. All the crimes of his life (his praises of the heretic Queen and the heretic Prophet being of course some of the most atrocious), all the generous efforts which had been made to reconcile him to the Church were announced as the justification of a perpetual exelusion from it. A churchman and Christian no longer, he could only now be treated as a subject of the civil power; the Church could only make its humble petition to that power, that it would treat him, who had once been her son, with as much clemency as possible. Eight days were still allowed for repentance and confession. On the 17th of February he was burnt in the midst of the city. One who believed the sentence to be just, and who watched the execution of it with satisfaction, owns that Bruno did not quail. When his condemnation was pronounced, he lifted up his eyes, it is said, and spoke the words, "I fancy you tremble more to utter it than I do to hear it." When a crucifix was held before him, he turned away his eyes, so the reporter affirms, and would not look upon it. What inferences others may draw from such an act, we know not. To us it is no

His excommunication.

His execution.

The crucifix

proof that Bruno died a proud contemner of Him whose image was set before him there. He knew what any apparent homage to it would mean; he knew it would be accepted as a homage to those who were assuming a right to pronounce judgment in His name. It may be, that they had succeeded in utterly alienating him from a belief in a crucified King of the world. It may be, that because he still held that belief in his inmost heart, he appealed from the assembly and the judges before him to that King who would one day gather all nations to His tribunal, and would say, that any act of mercy or injustice which had been done to one of those for whom He died had been done to Him. In either case, might it not be true, that those who kindled the fire had more cause for trembling than he who endured it? If the earth would not always hide her blood or cover her slain, if there is a woe pronounced on those by whom offences come, if all earthly splendour and power shall shrink and fade away when the Lamb that has been slain is revealed, was he who had been stripped bare of all robes and titles to human respect the most pitiable object there? Might not some who witnessed that sight, who exulted in it, exclaim, "Mountains, fall upon us, hills, cover us, from the wrath of a Love which we are insulting with a wrath of hate!"

Bruno and his judges.

Another trial-day.

Theology and physics.

58. It is easy to ask such questions about a martyr with whom we wholly sympathize, whom we believe to be entirely right. We compel ourselves to ask them about Bruno, because we believe him to have been in many of his opinions utterly wrong; because we do not disguise from ourselves, and have not endeavoured to disguise from our readers, that if the charge of Atheism against him was utterly false, the charge of Pantheism is abundantly justified by some of his most earnest and deliberate words. The excuse for the assertion of the Inquisitor, that however he may have used philosophical language, he was in truth striking at the heart of theology, is therefore not slight. But those who believe that there *is* a heart in theology, that it is not merely a collection of dry bones covered with a very sensitive skin, must also be convinced that it could stand these and greater shocks than these. They will expect it to prove its strength by encountering the questions which philosophy has raised, by claiming the facts which have given rise to those questions as God's facts, which it is blessed to know, sinful to conceal or explain away. This the theologian should do just because he confesses God to be the author of the visible as well as of the invisible world; because he does not confound either with Him. How those laws of the physical universe, which Bruno was one of the first to acknowledge, one of the bravest to witness for—those laws which have now compelled the assent of

The Inquisitor's apology valid if theology is an invention of man.

Bellarmin's school as much as of Protestants—are connected with the great laws of the moral universe, those which concern the relation of man with God; how the quickener of one can be the giver of life to the other; this was the great demand which the sixteenth century awakened, and which the centuries after were to ponder. Those who feared the issue of the inquiry might well try to stifle it. No one of us should dare to say that he might not have dared to stifle it as Bellarmin and San-Severino did, that he might not have hoped that it should be extinguished in a material fire. But every one of us has a right to ask, What those who took that course were doing for the well-being of their race? Every one of us has a right to claim the history of the Jesuit Order, the history of Rome itself, as the reply to that question. Let it be said—the proofs of the saying are manifold—that Calvin or Beza would have acted just as Bellarmin did, that English Episcopalians, that Scotch Presbyterians, would have followed eagerly in their steps, and have pleaded their precedents. There is all the more reason, seeing the temptations of us all are the same, to ask, Whether the curse of God has not accompanied every one of these attempts to do Him service? whether every effort to prevent an inquiry into the secrets of nature has not shaken the faith of men in a moral government of the world? whether every fire that has been lighted to consume a heretic or a Pantheist has not done more than all other arguments to cultivate Atheism, or to suggest the suspicion that the spirit of evil is the supreme Lord?

The question of the age.

How it could *not* be solved.

Though all churches and schools attempted that method.

59. In that splendid assembly of princes, ambassadors, nobles, doctors, which was gathered together in Oxford when Bruno disputed on behalf of the Copernican doctrine, one illustrious member of the university must, we think, have been wanting. Richard Hooker, if we follow Walton's chronology rightly, will, before that time, have encountered the kind nursing, and accepted the fatal prescription of Mrs. Churchman, and so will have passed "from the tranquillity of his college, from that garden of pleasure, of peace, and of a sweet conversation, into the thorny wilderness of a busy world." It must have been a year or two after that his old pupils found him at Draiton-Beauchamp reading the Odes of Horace, "while he was tending his small allotment of sheep in a common field;" till he was "called to rock the child's cradle," which employment did not awaken so much "pity for his condition," as that they were "forced to leave him to the company of his wife Joan." To which circumstances, though his pupils, his biographer, and his readers may lament them ever so reasonably, we owe it that the *Ecclesiastical Polity* is what it is. However favourable the quiet of Corpus may have been to the meditation of such a work, the

Richard Hooker. Born 1553. Died 1600.

See I. Walton's Life, pp. 17 & 18.

See I. Walton, pp. 18 & 19

Hooker's conservatism

English, not collegiate.

sheep, the cradle, and the wife Joan, may have had greater influence in the formation of its author's character, may have imparted to it less of a scholastic, more of an English, conservatism. For assuredly it is the work which, more perhaps than any in our language, embodies *that* conservatism, and distinguishes it from that other form of it which was conspicuous in *Nundinio* and the Ptolemaists whom Bruno ridicules. Hooker's sympathies would, no doubt, have been with them. If he and Bruno had met, they would not have had the slightest appreciation of each other's gifts or purposes. Now that he has become one of our classics, the reasons of our admiration are probably as little intelligible to accomplished foreigners—Frenchmen, Italians, Germans—as he himself would have been to a traveller of his own age. They would smile and shrug their shoulders if we presumed to call him a philosopher; they would find a ready, and by no means a wholly unfair solution of the influence he has acquired over us, in our preference of the actual to the ideal. Yet we are fully persuaded that the English judgment of two centuries and a-half, however affected by considerations specially belonging to ourselves, is a right one; that Hooker's principles have influenced the countries which care least for him, and that any sketch of moral or metaphysical inquiries would be grossly defective in which he was omitted.

Hooker little appreciated by foreigners.

Their explanation of our esteem for him.

The Puritan controversy.

60. Though the philosophical claims of Hooker rest mainly upon his two first books, which only touch by accident upon the controversy that called them forth, it would be a signal mistake to look at them without reference to that controversy, and especially to the statement of it which is contained in the preliminary preface "to those that seek (as they term it) the Reformation of the laws and the orders ecclesiastical in the Church of England." Hooker exhibits there much of the ordinary talent of a special pleader; he has not that "judicial" calmness which has earned him his cant prefix (it has been diluted into "judicious"); nowhere does he more justify Mr. Keble's wise and honest opinion, that the meekness which Walton supposes him to have possessed as a natural gift was the result of severe discipline acting upon a hasty and irritable temperament. There are many passages in it (we do not allude specially to the one which contains his clever *argumentum ad homines* with the Puritans in favour of her sacred Majesty's Court of High Commission, the nature whereof is the same with that amongst the Jews, albeit the power is not so great,) which critics of a later age, with the advantage of history to guide them, might "wish to blot." Nevertheless, here—from this more than from any part of the work—we discover the relation in which Elizabethan England stood to

Oxford, Ed., 1850. Vol. i., Preface.

Preface, chap. vi., 4.

the surrounding world, and how it was affected by the influences that were working most powerfully in it. In this point of view nothing is more remarkable than the feeling with which the name of Calvin inspires the antagonist of the Genevan discipline. Hooker not merely reverences it, but trembles before it. He is obliged to explain the kind of necessity under which Calvin was laid to establish his form of government, and the series of outward circumstances which gave it its peculiar character, that he may disprove its universal obligation, and that he may have courage to convict its author of the natural infirmity of imparting to his own conception a divine authority. The caution and hesitancy of Hooker in finding fault with the foreign Reformer, when he was most disposed to be severe upon his English imitators, show how much the metaphysics of the *Institutes* governed his mind. At the same time, it is manifest from these passages, as well as from many in Hooker's own life, that there was more than an accidental connection between the metaphysics and the discipline; that it was not merely the vanity of an organizer and ruler, which supposed the one to be the proper exponent of the other; that there was a profound natural logic in the Puritan conviction that they were inseparable, which Hooker's artificial logic could not shake. It is impossible not to feel that the more effectually he demolishes their insignificant outworks, the more surely he will drive them into a citadel beyond the range of his guns. The irresistible decree of God to choose a Church of saved men out of an evil world—was this or was it not the foundation of a Church's existence? If a universal Church, professing to exist for fifteen centuries was to be assailed, must not this be the ground from which it is assailed? No doubt, when this profound inquiry ended in debates about rings, and surplices, and bowings, the contrast between the grandeur of the premises and the pitifulness of the conclusion was startling enough—a certain sense of the ridiculous dwelling in all human beings, not extinct in divines, was a very effectual aid to learned arguments. But the contempt might be pushed too far; it might provoke an effort to make the results more commensurate with the primary maxims; it might bring them forth with a tremendous—if they encountered no opposing *principle*, only opposing prejudices, with an irresistible—might.

See especially the whole of Chap. ii.

Calvinism of Hooker.

The Metaphysics and the Discipline not easily separated.

Hooker's conflict, in what respects hazardous and difficult.

The premises and conclusion.

61. There *was* such a principle encountering Calvinism in the English mind and in Hooker's mind. Ever and anon it burst forth in spite of himself. In his earliest sermon he committed himself to a proposition about a Divine Will that all men should be saved, which he tried to express in terms that should not interfere with the received Predestinarianism—utterly failing, as the

The anti-Calvinism in Hooker's mind.

See Walton's *Life*, p. 16.

See a learned discourse of Justification, Works, and how the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown. Hooker's Works, Vol. ii., p. 661.

His Calvinism makes him a true Elizabethan writer.

Not a Compromiser more than the Queen herself.

Like her, a champion of freedom, though often ready to stifle it.

The reverence for Law.

champions of that system affirmed, in his experiment. It might strike us in this day, as even a less bold affirmation, that the doctrine of justification by faith did not necessarily involve the perdition of all Romanists. But Mr. Travers and his friends perceived how much mischief was latent in that concession. The question of the true or false Church could not be separated in their minds from the ultimate safety or ruin of the individuals of which each was composed. In such arguments Hooker could only speak with great timidity, not through fear of giving offence to men, but because so many of the fundamental axioms of his opponents were also his. Had it been otherwise, he would not have represented so remarkably as he does (more remarkably than any divine, perhaps than any English prose writer) that union of opposites in which we have contended that the strength of the Elizabethan period lay, whatever seeds of weakness it might leave for the succeeding time. In him, as little as in his royal mistress, was there any inclination to a mere balance of opinions. Circumstances compelled both, for the defence of that which they held, to resist aggressions proceeding from two opposite quarters. But both were sure that that which they were fighting for was a real substantial possession—a trust from God, not to be abandoned for any clever and ingenious conceptions of men. Both were alternately intolerant, and the best and most effective champions of toleration against those who would have made the existence of it impossible. Both at times made light of convictions and beliefs which a wiser Judge had determined, for higher ends than temporary peace, that men should not part with, but should even be ready to die for. Both confessed a law which binds men, and which they do not create for themselves; a law which they might occasionally pervert into the coercion of opinions, but which would at last be found the great protection of each opinion from the coercion of some other—an instrument for preventing truth from being mangled and extinguished by them all.

The School slavery to Opinion.

62. This assertion of Law against Opinion is what we have described as the true English conservatism, whereof the School conservatism is a poor counterfeit. The fretful contempt of the Oxford doctors for the notion that an astronomer in the sixteenth century could have a principle discovered to him of which previous centuries had been ignorant, indicated an outrageous reverence for opinion, no reverence at all for law. They believed that which Aristotelian logicians had thought about God's universe; they had no belief that it had an Order of its own apart from that which their logic put into it. Hooker is continually *tempted* to put down the Puritans by a catena of opinions in favour of an ecclesiastical system, as the disputants of his *Alma*

Mater put down Bruno by a catena of opinions in favour of a sidereal system. In his preface he often yields to this temptation; whenever he does, purchasing the benefit of some telling, perhaps very just, sarcasm against the self-will and arrogance of his opponents at the terrible price of making them feel that they were defending the commandments of God against the traditions of men—that he was cutting away the ground on which the honour of all martyrs must rest. When, with admirable common sense, he pleads for a necessary progress in ecclesiastical arrangements against the Puritan notion of an unchangeable platform, he does not extricate himself from this perplexity, but involves himself in another; the questions, What is the limit of the alterations? how, without an infallible authority, could it be determined which was or was not legitimate?—always staring him in the face, and threatening to overwhelm him. But when, leaving these disputes to the traders and hawkers in argumentation, upon whose monopoly he was unfairly intruding, he begins to discuss the meaning and nature of Law, the kinds, purposes, obligations of particular Laws, we feel that we are transported into another region; a region in which, rare as the atmosphere is, we can walk firmly and breathe freely, looking down upon the mists and clouds, able to contemplate the vicissitudes of the earth by a light which comes from the throne of God.

Hooker, as a mere arguer, liable to the same.

In that character he is puzzled both by what is stationary and what is progressive.

The study of Laws helps him to honour both.

63. Great as are the praises which have been bestowed by impartial scholars like Mr. Hallam on the eloquence of Hooker's early books—often as passages have been quoted from them by eminent orators who had no ecclesiastical purpose to serve—we doubt if justice has yet been done to the worth of this divine, as a witness against some of the temptations to which he was himself, both as predestinarian and a churchman, specially exposed, as a witness for the principles which are most precious to a country wherein every man is a politician, and yet which such a country is most liable to forget. LAW was one of the words most in the mouths of all the Reformers. But Law had presented itself to Luther as the great antithesis of Gospel. Law had enjoined him to do what he could not do, had threatened him with infinite punishments for his disobedience. With fierce contempt he swept away the feeble Erasmian interpretation of St. Paul's language respecting the law, which would identify it with the local ceremonial code of the Jews. The *moral* law, the law "Thou shalt not covet," was what he felt to be big with a tremendous curse, not upon Jews, but upon him. All ceremonies, however vexatious, might have been tolerable, if he could have escaped from the thunders and lightnings which threatened death for the violation of this permanent and everlasting decree. But he could discover no such escape in any indulgences for trans-

Hooker a representative of the English reverence for law.

How Luther thought of law.

His reading of St. Paul.

He admits a human law for secular men.

Divine and human law almost identical with the Calvinist; both penal.

gressions, past, present, or to come. He was condemned for being a sinner; unless he could cease to be a sinner the law must continue to enforce its sentence; God could not reverse it. Deliverance out of the prison of moral evil, the power of rising up a new man, was what he craved for. This he saw was what St. Paul had also demanded as necessary for himself. The discovery of his own want gave him an insight into the apostle's meaning. But even if he read in that apostle of "a law of the spirit of life," it was almost impossible, from the course of his history, that he should not continue always to regard law with a kind of horror, and that when he was forced to speak of it as having some other function than that of driving men to a better covenant, he should not implicitly or explicitly limit that function to secular men, to those who were incapable of apprehending the divine mystery. To the Calvinist, who drew so much sharper a line than he did between the elect church and the ungodly world, the opposition was even more certain to exhibit itself in this form. Only as the Calvinist was led by circumstances to exercise more of the functions of government, to assert more dominion for his ministers over peoples and their rulers, he was more forced to assert law in its rigid, condemning, penal sense, more disposed in that sense to magnify its greatness and divinity. So that for him the benignant and protective office of law was almost wholly lost. He could not conceive of it as anything but the enforcement of edicts under unspeakably tremendous sanctions. A few might be brought, by special mercies vouchsafed to them, into so gracious a state that they should act under an entirely different compulsion, and obey a righteous inspiration; but for the immense majority of mankind, stern threats and actual punishment were the great weapons of the Divine administration.

The contrast between this doctrine and that of the Ecclesiastical Polity.

The law of natural and

64. Pass from such apprehensions of laws as these to that idea of it which is summed up in the words, "Her seat is in the bosom of God, her voice is the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her care, the greatest as not exempted from her power." To hear of a whole universe hailing her as "the mother of its peace and joy," who can measure the difference? Evidently it is one not belonging to the surface of things, but dwelling in the very heart of them. A single gorgeous passage does not express it, far less exhaust it. That passage is valuable only as it gathers up the purpose of a whole book, the principle of a whole treatise. Everything in the work and in the mind of Hooker depends upon the recognition of a law which is not contained in statutes, which uses all sanctions and punishments, but is not dependent upon them. Carefully as he distinguishes the law to

which all natural things are subjected from that which voluntary creatures obey, he must assert one name as common to both. Affirm law in either case to be used in an improper or metaphorical sense, and you undermine the doctrine of his treatise. We are not saying whether it can or cannot be undermined; Hobbes and others will give us plenty of opportunity of discussing that question hereafter. We are merely attempting to ascertain what Hooker meant. It is necessary for that purpose to understand that he, reverencing the name of Calvin, and accepting, as he believed, his theological dogmas, did nevertheless, in the radical principle of his polity, throw off his yoke; under a different nomenclature concealing far more than all that diversity of feeling which had been indicated by his discourse on the double Will in God. *There* he was fighting with merely scholastical weapons, attempting by what looked like a refinement to get rid of a portentous difficulty. *Here* he was seeking a solution for that difficulty, not in subtleties of human language, but in the facts of the universe, in the relations of all spiritual creatures to God, in the nature of God himself

that of voluntary creatures.

The doctrine of his first and second books more fatal to his theological consistency than that of his sermon.

65. It would be easy to found upon this statement an argument that the English Church--which has always accepted Hooker as her best champion, and has felt that he was no mere champion, but was possessed and penetrated by her highest life—was in her most Calvinistical age a protestant against the purely Calvinistical scheme. But into such debates we are not anxious to enter. It is more important, both for practical purposes, and for the purposes of this special treatise, that we should point out how much Hooker was indebted to the severe theology of his time for that very apprehension which counteracted it. Only when men had acquired the habit of starting from the highest ground of all, and working their way downwards through different orders and gradations to the common business of life, could these books of laws have been written. If Calvin and his followers had not accustomed divines, philosophers, even statesmen, to think of a Will paramount to all wills, which all are created to obey, such questions as these would have had no interest: What *kind* of Will is this? Are its exercises the exercises of a naked sovereignty? Is it in its nature right and orderly? Is the order of the universe the expression of its nature and character, or merely something which is arbitrarily imposed upon it? Contemplated from the point of view of many philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, such questions are at once unnecessary and unsolvable. The world is to be constructed or examined without reference to them; its affairs can be adjusted in some fashion or other, whatever learned doctors may resolve about the ultimate justice or tyranny which has presided over

Nevertheless Hooker's Calvinism was very helpful to him.

Questions which it raised.

Necessity that they should not be left in vagueness.

its creation and its sustentation. The law or order of which Hooker spoke, whether it is applied to the highest or meanest subjects, is a mere phantom, the dream of a shadow, if this controversy is unsettled. Supposing, then, English laymen or divines, patrons of the English Church, or the receivers and distributors of its offerings, determine that it is inexpedient to meddle with such high topics, that the Puritans who did meddle with them were mere fanatics—that our safety is in holding to what is established, just because the foundations on which it rests are so precarious, and, if they should be examined too carefully, might crumble into dust—they must seek for new defenders; the author of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* will not serve them in the least; the judgment which they pass upon his opponents is a condemnation of him.

How Hooker asserts a position for the civil ruler.

66. Hooker's position, in reference to the English statesman as opposed to the English churchman, should also be carefully considered by any one who would rightly estimate his place in politico-philosophical history. Whether or not we reckon the last three books of the *Polity* as his, no one has done so much as he to vindicate the dignity of the civil government from the assaults either of pure scripturalists, or of those who would treat it as the instrument of a hierarchy, raised up by God to do jobs which this hierarchy is too delicate to touch with its own fingers. He may have often failed in tracing the boundary line between the two provinces. Two centuries and a-half must have been strangely wasted, if they have not taught us lessons on that subject which were not within his reach; if they have not corrected blunders and intrusions on both sides which he would have permitted. But he did not, like the majority of his contemporaries, Calvinistical and Jesuit, tie the controversy with bandages of argument or analogy which would relax under the pressure of no new discovery. A theory that the State was to the Church as the body is to the soul, served a number of learned schoolmen in place of any induction into the actual conditions of either. Indeed, the chief value of the comparison lay in this, that men were compelled to ask how they were to get at the nature and relations of the things compared; whether anatomists and physiologists were to fix the powers and functions of the body, or Aristotle and his commentators; whether the qualities of the soul were to be ascertained by making the New Testament play the part of an interpreter to the treatise "Περὶ Ψυχῆς?" From these metaphors and plays with words, Hooker was preserved by the practical discipline of an English life. But he was preserved also, at least in a great measure, from the perils of *that* life, partly by the poverty which deprived him of all a dignitary's interest in representing the alliance of the

Political analogies.

Hooker avoids them without sinking into a mere State churchman.

Church with the State as a condition of human infirmity, as an inevitable concession of God to Mammon; still more by the habitual elevation of his mind, by his recognition of an order which never proved itself to be more divine than when it watched over the vulgarest interests of the poorest creatures. When he read how the so-called spiritual and secular powers had chafed for ages against each other: how insolence and subserviency had alternately characterized the first: how the second had at one time sought to crush its rival by flattery, at another by violence—had complained of the tyranny which its influence with the people made mighty, or besought its help to keep down the belief or the unbelief of its subjects, as either appeared to interfere with their allegiance—as he read these miserable records of which history is full, he may have longed to escape into a "world of order." But he will never have allowed that this strife of selfish interests created or preserved the principles of which it bore witness. He may have admitted that under a righteous ruler, the paltriness of one party may be permitted to balance and counteract the paltriness of another. His judiciousness, except in some evil moment, will never have been exhibited in *promoting* this kind of adjustment. He regarded churchmen and statesmen as alike ministers of a divine economy, filling different places in the same body politic, performing different functions on its behalf, which only the ambition of those who called themselves spiritual, or called themselves civil, rulers, caused to interfere with each other; which could only be separated when the different parts of the body had ceased to form a whole. St. Paul, not as an interpreter of Aristotle, but as an interpreter of the actual conditions of human fellowship, thus became the guide to our politician—a guide, however, whom he was not able to follow except so far as he could apply his universal maxims to the particular circumstances of the British commonwealth. If modern statesmen who have had some perception of an actual relation, as distinct from a mere alliance, between the national and the Catholic societies, had studied the *Ecclesiastical Polity* more, and the Laudian deductions from it less, they might, we think, have escaped many of the nets in which they have found themselves entangled, while endeavouring to reconcile the facts of the world which they see with the principles which they suppose they have discovered in the constitution of the Church. In the impossibility which the civil ruler finds to establish unity by all his arts much as he desires it, inconvenient as the interruption of it is to his plans, ready as he would be to attain it by the most straightforward system of coercion—enlightened and godly statesmen should perceive the clearest proofs that it must have a deeper foundation than any expediency; that it

Accepts St. Paul's doctrine of society, in preference to that which treats it as a balance of corruptions

Modern writers on State and Church, how they might have profited by Hooker.

must be expressed in a body not tied by any earthly limitations; that the different negations of belief which constitute the particular sects and heresies into which the world has been divided, cannot any of them contain that expression; that it can be reached by no awkward experiments to negative any of those negations; that unity cannot stand in any opinion, but in Him who is the object of all opinions, in whom alone they find their meeting point. In vindicating against the Puritans the order of society which he found existing, with all its apparent anomalies and secular mixtures, Hooker may sometimes have obtained the approbation of the ecclesiastic who is opposed to all change, sometimes of the statesman who thinks only of arrangements that will keep off the deluge for his time. But he was in truth providing for changes which were certain to occur, and witnessing for that which will prove its substance and its eternity in the midst of deluges and by means of them.

The failure of persecution a grand step towards unity.

Advantage of connecting an individual life with the stages of general history.

67. The annalist, in the strict sense of that word, has one advantage to balance many inconveniences, over those who divide their histories by larger measures of time. He records the opening of a life amidst the events of one year; that life he may follow through successive seasons of its growth, on to its full flower and fruit in later years. So the man appears surrounded by many, at least, of the circumstances that are acting on him; so we may trace the effect of those circumstances upon the gradual developments or sudden changes of his opinions and his character. Sometimes a fortune not very different from this may befall those who are contemplating half-centuries. They may find a very eminent man whose mind is formed in one age, though his most conspicuous fame belongs to another. In such cases, the historian must determine with the best judgment he has, which period he most faithfully represents, and must assign him to that. Now and then it will be his duty to speak of him in connection with both. With Shakespeare we acquiesce after a little hesitation in the arrangement which gives him to the Elizabethan age, however many of his plays may have been first acted or even composed after the accession of James. The reader's instinct seems to tell him that so consummate an interpreter of history must have flourished in the national, could only have lasted into the pedantical, time. A similar instinct, we think, would lead to an almost opposite judgment in the case of Bacon. Though older than Shakespeare, he seems to have been always in a course of training for that reign in which he was first greatly patronized, in which the most remarkable of his works were written, in which he reached his highest elevation and sustained his fall. He who has so much title to be considered the lawgiver of the seventeenth century, must not be

Shakespeare belongs to the Tudor, not the Stuart time.

Bacon, on the other hand, a Jacobite.

hastily seized as a possession of the sixteenth. Nevertheless, his "commencements" are of such importance to the after history of his influence and his life, and they have such a close relation with the time to which Bruno and Hooker appertain, that it would be a great mistake to defer them till the actual appearing of the *Advancement of Learning* or the *Novum Organum.*

Influence of domestic training on Bacon.

68. The life of Bacon which is to accompany the new edition of his works will probably throw much light upon his childhood, and upon the influences which he received from his father's house. But without that knowledge one may safely affirm that the old Lord Keeper, with his sensible and devout wife, had no small share in forming the scientific man, as well as the man of affairs; still more, in linking together those tendencies in Bacon's mind which we are often disposed to consider as divergent, if not hostile. It is important to remember that the mind of a shrewd Elizabethan statesman and lawyer was the first that was acting upon his, and that, if there was any counteraction, it came from the quiet, homely wisdom of a woman, which is often so much more divining than the astuteness of a man. The few hints which his biographers have given of an early direction of the boy's thoughts to a Court life, and of the notice, not prophetic of much after advancement, which he received from the Queen, are not inconsistent, we think, with what we are told of his meditations and discontents at Cambridge. There were, no doubt, at this time, and previous to this time, characteristic differences between the two Universities of England. Traces of them may be found in the letters of Erasmus and in the history of the Reformation movement. But *the* difference which later times have developed must be ascribed principally to Bacon himself; he, more than any man, was to make Cambridge the counterweight to the Aristotelianism of Oxford. When he went to Trinity College the studies of both places must have been essentially of the same character. If Bruno had held his Copernican disquisition beside the banks of the Cam, he would have met with essentially the same arguments, and with the same kind of treatment, which disgusted him in the sister society. One may be quite sure that the rebellion of young Bacon, which is said to have begun so early, against the Cambridge text-books, had very little in common with that which we have been studying in Bruno. It was not the narrowness, the utterly unimaginative quality of these books, which is likely to have offended the son of Sir Nicholas. He had not been trained in an imaginative school. Sagacious observations upon men's actions and motives, hints, not specially elevated, about the manner of dealing with them, just and prudent directions about his own conduct, were what the young student will have been most familiar with.

His Cambridge years.

Ground of his dislike to school doctors.

They were not too dry and minute, but too vague and loose for him.

If he had met anything at all corresponding to these in the so-called treatises on science which were put into his hands, he would easily have borne with any apparent dullness in them—he would have been quite content to wait for any brilliant results to come in due time—perhaps he could have dispensed with them altogether. But it was just the reverse of all the minute and particular experiences for which his father's conversation must have given him a taste, that he encountered in these logical pieces. Everything was general, formal, out of contact with the facts of life. He could discover no passage whatever from the world of observation in which he had been brought up, to the world of formulas into which he had been transported. Human society, it seemed, was full of individual examples, of curious varieties, each one of which it would be amusing to follow, even if there were no practical advantage, no new prospect to be obtained, no pitfalls to be avoided, by the examination. In Nature all seemed blank and dreary, settled beforehand in books, inviting no research into its own distinctions and properties. Could it be? Was it only the perversities and contradictions of self-will that saved the universe from being a dead and hopeless level? If there was a world not distracted by these, must that be utterly meaningless and torpid? Was that natural world, which God beheld with all its powers and energies, and lo! it was very good, a mere creature and tool of the school logic?

Contrast of human studies with the reigning physics.

The conflict of these feelings and thoughts not uncommon.

69. To suppose that such thoughts were working confusedly in the mind of a boy at Cambridge, is not to attribute to him any precocious genius. The like thoughts have probably been in thousands of minds which never have been able to give expression to them. Nay, might it not be well if the professors and tutors of universities, which have been affected, and in part reformed, by Bacon's influence, would consider seriously whether some such thoughts may not be at work even in their day—whether they may not account for some blights and failures that have caused them perplexity or indignation? May it not be that young men initiated in their families into one or another form of practical work, even into that form which exhibits itself merely in animal sports and exercises, find it hard to discover the link between the learning of life and that which they are told is the learning of books? May it not be necessary even now to consider what are the points of contact between these spheres, that they may not remain for ever apart, to the exceeding peril of both? Happily, in Bacon's case, the difficulty of reconciliation was too serious—the mind which was made conscious of it was too active—to suffer that the result should be merely vague dissatisfaction. Often and often the young man might resolve that his business was in the world of human

Bacon's strong motives for confining himself to the life of a lawyer or a courtier.

beings—that his hopes were in law, or diplomacy, or the Court. Suggestions from home would confirm that inward inclination. He would be told that he had nothing to do but to go through his course at Cambridge reputably, to pass his disputations well, and that then he might cast aside the Cosmos about which philosophers had written so much, and knew so little, for the Cosmos in which there were so many tricks to be played, and so many prizes to be won; his mother may have whispered, in which he might do so much practical good to his fellows—might fight with injustice and vindicate right. With these motives—the indifferent and the high, urging him mightily, conspiring with the vigorous practical wit he had inherited, with the disgust for the technicalities of the schools which he had conceived—it was natural that Bacon should undertake travels, not for the purpose of enlarging his knowledge of Nature, but of Courts and kingdoms. It was not wonderful that he should embody the results of those travels in a clear, rapid, and masterly view of the States of Europe, as they existed in his day. It is even less surprising that the son of a Chancellor should hope to learn, in his chambers at Gray's Inn, much more than he had ever learnt in his rooms at Trinity; or that direct rewards should seem to be awaiting his studies there, while there was little to be hoped for himself or for mankind from those which he had quitted.

His travels.

His view of the States of Europe.

Vocations not to be resisted.

70. But Bacon is perhaps the most striking instance on record of a man who had a work given him to do, from which he could not be turned aside either by influences without or inclinations within. Such vocations are admitted in name, at least, by divines and theologians. Too often they limit them to their own special tasks; as often they give themselves credit for the impulses which theoretically they attribute to a higher source. It is the specially worldly character of Bacon, and of those by whom he was chiefly surrounded, which makes his recurrence to unprofitable studies, and his pursuit of an unpopular method, so remarkable. With a cordial respect for his legal pursuits—with an hereditary bias in favour of them—neglecting no opportunities of acquiring legal knowledge, or that statesmanlike knowledge which has been sometimes thought incompatible with it—having, after his father's death, besides all other spurs to concentration of mind on a single object, that one of poverty, which we might have fancied would have been wanting to him —quite aware of the prejudices of his profession against those who mix any other worship with that of Themis—beset by dangerous rivals, such as Coke, who never turned aside to the right or to the left—aspiring to success in a Court in which Burleigh's gruff voice would be heard scorning as much the pretensions of searchers into Nature, as of poets who described it—

Science forced upon Bacon, in spite of ever increasing reasons for discarding it.

with no hope that the Royal Mistress would counteract the prejudices of her minister in the one case, as she might, now and then, in the other—the young aspirant yet found it impossible not to care more for the wisdom that was to come from the laboratory than for that which was to earn him prizes in Westminster Hall. By wonderful tokens it was made manifest to him that there was something more precious than the gold of Ophir—that there were benefits which he had to confer upon mankind—that it was not at his choice to determine in what direction he should turn his thoughts—that a Divinity was shaping his ends, rough hew them how he would.

Bacon ultimately sets physical studies immeasurably above all others.

71. This great moral we derive from the early part of Bacon's career—one perhaps not less precious than those which are hidden in the latter part of it—one which helps to make those more intelligible, if not less sad. That violent preference for physical above human studies which is expressed in the *Novum Organum*, might call forth some remonstrance from moral and metaphysical students, if it had not so abundant a justification in the experience of the writer. How could he help feeling that pursuit to be brave, noble, and serene, to which he had betaken himself in opposition to all vulgar and mundane inducements, which removed him far from the region of fraud and flattery, which appealed to none of the lower instincts of his nature? It was not surely from want of reverence for that which is best in human life, best in himself, that he turned with affectionate gratitude to those investigations which had most awakened all his zeal for truth, which had afforded him least temptation to tamper with falsehood. He might be a utilitarian; but it was in contempt of utility that he betook himself to the reformation of physics. He might, if he had cultivated some of his faculties exclusively, have been the subtlest of English moralists. But the subtlety would have been most pernicious. He would have been a worse Machiavelli; because the Machiavelli of a soil which is peculiarly ill adapted for raising plants of that species. Instead of blaming his over-estimate of natural science, the moralist ought thankfully to acknowledge, that whatever is noblest in his essays, and even in his political writings, must be traced to his intercourse with purer objects and steadier laws than those which he discovered in the ordinary transactions of men, and in the councils of princes. We do not, indeed, find in these essays that clear conviction of a good order beneath all things which characterizes Hooker, nor that genial sympathy with men which belongs to Shakespeare, nor that power of reconciling the forms of modern life with the old chivalry which illustrates *The Faery Queen*. They have come from another mind than any one of theirs, from one deliberately prefer-

Justification of that preference.

Differences between him and his great contemporaries.

ring the actual to the ideal, as they also did, but not caring to seek the ideal in the actual, as they always did, consciously or unconsciously. Yet he is one of their age and race. Even if he has some dangerous liking for the art of dissimulation as an art, he has always a reserved reverence for the thing which is, a secret contempt for those whose business it is to make masks, or to wear them. That he fancied this must be the function of the poet, was a symptom of his own disposition, and a prophecy of the kind of opinion which he would help to diffuse in the next century. By adopting it, he rejected one of the instruments which had been effectual in the Elizabethan age for penetrating and breaking the masks which statesmen and diplomatists liked to wear; those who were impatient of Hamlet and the Ghost were very likely to make Polonius supreme. Yet there remained to him his faith in the facts and mysteries of nature, and this was to be his substitute, and in some measure the substitute of those who followed in his steps, for what they lost of communion with the spiritual world. They might at times convince themselves that there were only ghosts in that world, that only madmen pretended to hold any intercourse with it; but so long as unspeakable wonders revealed themselves in *this* world, they could not suppose that prudential moralities and paltry trickeries were to rule over it. How much Bacon was tempted to accept that doctrine, how much he owed to his physical studies for enabling him to resist it, we learn before we pass into the period of his worldly triumphs and punishments. His letters to Essex may present a different appearance when they have undergone an able collation and revision. But we can hardly hope that the most careful criticism, and the best illustration of obscure passages in them, will remove the impression which they leave on the mind of readers not at all inclined to judge Bacon harshly, and quite willing to accept the apologies that are commonly offered for his conduct to his friend when he came forward as one of the Queen's counsel against him. We lament his appearance as a Mentor far more than as a prosecutor of the wilful young man. Surely, with a tenth of his knowledge of character, he might have perceived that the one hope of saving Essex from ruin was to invoke the more generous impulses which were lying hid behind his vanity; that appeals to worldly prudence, whether desirable or not in themselves, must be wasted on one who had nothing in him which could respond to them. That his arguments were entirely of this character, must be regarded as a condemnation of his sense and judgment. We should conclude at once that he had never dreamed of any higher type of character than Henry VII., if we did not remember those grand

Even in human affairs he esteems truth above fiction.

His contempt of poetry.

His letters to Essex.

What they indicate respecting the tutor.

His Prayer.

passages in the essays, which are interpreted and raised to a still higher power by the prayer which closes the preface to the *Instauratio Magna.*

Transition to the seventeenth century.

72. We gladly accept that prayer as the introduction to the age which we are about to consider. We spoke of Henry VII. as linking the fifteenth century in England to the sixteenth—as belonging to a Machiavellian time, yet as giving us a promise and pledge of a time that should contain kings and reformers in the north, as well as Medicean princes and popes in the south. Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, taken in conjunction with those whom they opposed and with those whom they befriended, have more than fulfilled that promise. The Tudor reigns in England have presented some of the grandest signs of a grand era, as well as some of the more dismal signs of an era in which the darkness was struggling mightily with the light. The more truly we reverence those reigns, without seeking to hide any of the evil which is in them, the more we shall be prepared for the lessons, moral and metaphysical, political and theological, which the Stuarts in England, and their contemporaries on the Continent, have bequeathed to us.

CHAPTER VI.

FIRST HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

England and the Continent.

1. He who takes England as a guide to the history of this period may seem to be in danger of committing great mistakes. The unusually pacific character of James I. appears to stand out in direct contrast to the feelings which could generate a war of thirty years in the centre of Europe. For a moment one might conclude that the Stuart dynasty was to give us more of an island character than we had possessed before; that we were to stand more aloof than in the Plantagenet or Tudor times from the conflicts of the outer world. Such a consequence of the accession of a race of Scotch princes would have been strange, seeing that Scotland, from the earliest times, had been so closely associated with the policy of France, and seeing that the links between it and that kingdom had never been so close as during the reign of Mary. The course of years showed that no such result did actually follow; that England, even when it was most occupied with its internal troubles, could not separate itself from the surrounding nations; that those very troubles were at last to bring it into closer contact with them, and to interpret, for us at least, what was passing in them.

The Scotch dynasty.

English history the best help for an Englishman in understanding foreign history.

2. There is no time, indeed, in which an Englishman may more safely follow the course which his patriotism would suggest to him. If he discovers the secret of the events which were passing in his own land, and of the characters which those events called forth, he will have the best clue which he can have for tracing his path through the labyrinth of foreign controversies and wars. If he measures, in some degree, the earnest purpose of those who plunged into the civil war, which was preparing during all this period, and was accomplished at the close of it—if he traces in our home circle the relations in which political questions stood to theological, and local circumstances to both—he will have far less difficulty in admitting that the German war was in the truest sense a war of opinions and principles, while he recognizes all the facts which show how the intrigues of princes, the ambition of individuals, the old feuds of cities and neighbourhoods, mingled in it. Above all, nothing

The Thirty Years' War.

will be so helpful to him in connecting the work of the world, as it is shown forth in wars and revolutions, and the heart-burnings which precede them, with the reasonings and speculations which are contained in books. Hard and artificial partitions, which he might be disposed to set up, and resolutely to maintain, if he were contemplating other regions of the earth with which his sympathies are comparatively feeble and the proceedings of which he has to learn through a strange language, prove utterly weak and fall down, when they are applied to a history, the meaning of which we divine quite as much by our feelings and by later experience, as from documents.

The unfitness of School divisions for history, tested in our own.

Systematic tendencies of this period.

3. The necessity of sacrificing system to facts, the impossibility of circumscribing human acts and purposes by lines which may serve admirably for school boundaries, should be pressed upon the student's attention with more than common urgency at the commencement of the seventeenth century. For there never was a time when the passion for system, the desire to map out all provinces of thought and life, and to prevent the encroachments of one upon another, was stronger than at this moment. The pacific temper which James I. had acquired from the constitutional timidity, and from the misfortunes of his childhood, may have been in opposition to the tendencies of his age; it was, no doubt, one cause of the struggle he had to maintain with some of its deeper convictions. But there were qualities in his mind which were in harmony with those of the men about him—which enable us to consider him in some sort, in however poor a sort, "a representative man." Buchanan apologized for making him a pedant, by saying it was the best thing he could make of him. At all events, it was the thing into which he could be most easily made. To have formed a king or a man, some other instruments should have been at work than a graceful Latin poet, kirk ministers bent upon sending forth a creature in their likeness, a lawless nobility, a set of young Court favourites. All these agents might contribute to make the royal pupil exalt book learning above all other. The scholar, because the cultivation of it was his profession; the divines, because they were now rapidly substituting the worship of a Divine Book for that of the Cross and the Virgin; the nobles, because he might hope to rule them by a craft which they did not possess; the favourites, because nothing would afford a better excuse for their wonder and flattery. And so he who had good excuse for trembling to look on a sword, might still indulge the combative propensities of his race. He might plunge into controversies with Popes, or with smokers of tobacco. He might conquer the world which Alexander had not conquered, but in which Alexander's master had obtained a deathless

James I.—in what respects typical of it.

How naturally book learning became his all in all.

supremacy; he might penetrate into that region of theological subtleties and refinements which the master had only seen afar off, but which his commentators had made their own. But though it was easy to give this shape to a boy's mind, though, once given, it was almost sure to continue for years, was it possible for such a ruler to have any influence over his generation? Must it not have been confined, at all events, to the Court in which he presided with so little dignity? Our belief is, that the influence of James was felt in every corner of his realm; that it reached every class of his subjects. The divines, scholars, dramatists, lawyers, scientific men, were all changed and moulded by it. The power of Queen Elizabeth over the nation, which reverenced and loved her, was not greater; though *this* power was of a directly opposite kind, and had exceedingly little to do with reverence or love. Such an effect was inevitable, if, as we suppose, an age of life was giving place to an age of books; if men were beginning to consider how the treasures which had been worked out of the mines of human experience and suffering might be laid up for many years; how they might pull down their barns and build greater; how when they had bestowed their fruits and goods, they might best take their ease—eat, drink, and be merry. But the ambition was defeated in many ways.

His effect upon his subjects.

He and his time in sympathy.

4. The contrast which strikes the reader of English history most vividly between Elizabeth and her successor, is that the one exercised prerogative, and that the other talked about it; that the one secured the obedience of her subjects, and that the other had a satisfactory theory for showing why they ought not to disobey him. This difference, which appears on the surface of their acts and speeches, penetrates also into the core of their lives—one might say, into the core of their times. Whatever was working and energetic in Elizabeth's day, was translated by James, and by those who surrounded him, into a notion or a phrase. Never was so sudden a change from real loyalty to formal adulation. Formal, but not therefore in the usual sense of the word, insincere. James represented an opinion about the rights of sovereigns, which was to be the watchword of one school or party, as an opinion about a corresponding opposing right was to be the watchword of another. What was this corresponding and opposing right? The answer to this question leads us to notice one of the most curious facts in the relations of men at this period, one of those apparent contradictions in their position, which perplex the on-looker most, but for which we, who live in after days, have most cause to be thankful. Law stood forth as the antagonist to Prerogative; the Charters of other days to the assumption of

Elizabeth and James.

Prerogatives—actual and theoretic.

the personal ruler in this. What a change! In the last reign the glory of law was asserted by Hooker, the champion of the Crown and the Church. In this reign the assertion of its greatness passed over to those who were most jealous of the claims of the Crown, and who suspected the clergy as its ally. And those clergymen who cheerfully owned the impeachment proclaimed a divine right as lodged in the person of the sovereign which could dispense with laws. The vindication of an order which cannot be broken through, which no mere will may trifle with—and of that order, as expressed in documents that had come down from Plantagenet or Saxon days—was left to those who had been suspected by Elizabeth of wanting all national sympathies, and who thought that they abhorred everything which could be traced to the times wherein a corrupt faith was professed.

Change in the position of parties.

Connection of this political question with the predestinarian controversy.

5. The force of this contradiction is only half understood, its bearing upon after times is only half realized, if we do not connect it with the theological controversies with which these parties were occupied. If James brought with him from Scotland an intense dislike to the rule of the kirk ministers, a great longing for a hierarchy which should sustain his authority and not usurp authority over him, he brought also the predestinarian theory which those ministers had taught him. He was more ready even than Hooker to separate the Calvinistical discipline from the Calvinistical doctrine; for if the last seemed most inconveniently to curtail the rights of sovereigns, the second appeared to assert a sovereign will as the ground of the universe. Such a will might easily seem to James the very best justification and pattern of an earthly monarchy. He might persuade himself that the French, Netherlanders, and Scotch had tortured the doctrine to the support of their rebellions; that he was far the better logician when he claimed it for despotism. It was perfectly consistent with this opinion that he should gladly adopt the teaching of the Kirk respecting the Pope; that he should treat as Antichrist a power which had so dangerously intruded upon the irresponsible dominion of kings. Such notions, the product at once of education and of feeling, characterizing equally his country and himself, belonged, naturally enough, to the first period of his reign. We know that they did not last till the end of it, or at least were greatly modified by the lessons of the English divines who were his political champions, and by discoveries which he made respecting the inclination of those who supported most strongly the Calvinistic theory. The Arminian notions about free-will became more and more closely connected, both in popular judgment and in the consciousness of the monarch, with his

Calvinism of James in the beginning of his reign.

Changes in his later years.

maxims respecting divine right. The assertors of Law and Charters, when they expressed their theological convictions, were also the assertors, in the strongest sense, of the divine decrees. Along with this change another was gradually taking place. The anti-papal furor of the king's youth was yielding to his admiration of the Spanish monarchy, to his dislike of his son-in-law, to his general disgust with Protestant insurgents. Yet we apprehend it was a strong feeling with him to the last, however combined with contradictory elements, however much these may have predominated in the minds of the sovereigns to whom they descended.

His anti-papal feelings.

6. It would be unpardonable to dwell at this length upon the oppositions and vicissitudes of such a mind as James's, if we did not regard that mind as a mirror in which we might see much of what was passing in the most thoughtful men of other countries, as well as of our own. It is a misfortune that we have come to use the words *little* and *insignificant* as if they were synonymous. A little man may be a very significant man; his littleness may even contribute to his significance. These movements of feeling about the controversy respecting the Divine Will and the human will; this mingling of such movements with questions respecting prerogative and privilege, arbitrary government and constitutional government; this apparently distorted connection between the respective theological and political dogmas; this violent tendency towards dogmatism; this strong reaction against dogmatism; indicate a very remarkable epoch in the history of metaphysical as well as moral beliefs. We shall presently discover how the question about a governing will and a subject will was about to take the most distinctly metaphysical form that it had yet taken; a form that would raise the whole inquiry,—what it had to do with practical politics—what it had to do with the highest theology—how these were related to each other. We shall find how, when this inquiry was once grappled with by a clear resolute thinker, the embarrassments which we have observed in one mind were brought to light in numbers; how needful it became that they should adjust and re-arrange their thoughts; or at least try to give some clearer account of them to themselves, than they had yet done. What consequences followed from this searching of hearts—what we have gained from it, or are yet to gain—will, we hope, be made manifest as we advance.

Lessons from his life.

Metaphysical, political, and theological questions intermingled.

Hobbes.

7. There is no fear, then, that we shall have any want of metaphysical questions in this political time. Those which had exercised men in former ages will exercise them still. If learned men wished to pronounce them insoluble, because learning had

Ethical studies, what form they assume.

The moral tendency of the times to be learnt from England.

Prudential aphorisms of the last generation.

Kingcraft.

"Prudence installed as virtue, instead of being employed as one of her indispensable handmaids, and the products of this exemplified and illustrated in the life of Abp. Williams, &c."—*Coleridge's Lit. Remains*, vol. iii., p. 183.

The dramatists.

apparently contributed so little help to their solution, men occupied with the business of life met with them in their daily tasks, peasants were tormented by them, heaven was invoked to remove the veil from them, because the wisdom of earth failed. Nor were ethical inquiries to lose any of their interest for this generation. The form which they take must always depend upon the practical tendencies of a period. Philosophy may give the *rationale* of ordinary men's doings, or may be a protest against them, and a search for some principle which they are ignoring. But in one sense or another it will always be regulated by that which it finds. If the philosopher is indifferent to the circumstances which surround him, he will effect nothing. The moral tone of the early part of the seventeenth century may be judged better, perhaps, from the Court of James I. than from that of Henry IV. France had been subject to all the debasing and distracting influences of a civil war: England had just passed through one of the most elevating passages of her history. What moral legacies had that great time left? Many, assuredly, which were well invested, and would descend with accumulations of interest to future times. But that one of which the immediate successors had the possession and usufruct, was the store of prudential maxims which men like Cecil and Walsingham had committed to their sons—the patriotic arts and artifices which, in the new hands, became selfish cunning. Here again the king was the model to the statesmen, who secretly smiled at his pretensions, and to the subjects, who complained of him as a foreigner. The kingcraft, which he esteemed the chief of all royal possessions, was a standard of excellence, intellectual and moral, to which a number of eyes were turned, that might, one would have thought, have had other objects to attract them. How much prudence became the god of the divines of this time, may be learnt from other books than those of the Lord Keeper Williams. The taint might be traced in men who were not like him mastered by the disease. In those who nearly overcame the infirmity, as affecting their inward lives, it yet betrayed itself in a kind of intellectual distortion, in a judgment of acts by their effects rather than by their worth, in the cultivation of what must be called a habit of squinting. With this was combined that great change which all have noticed who have compared Shakespeare either with Fletcher or Jonson; the transition from simple and hearty loyalty to a servile worship of prerogative, and a contempt of the people; from a reverence for women, to a notion of them as almost uniformly corrupt or intriguing; from the study of character to the observation of humours. This difference might be attributed to the men, and not the time, if the alteration had not been hailed as a progress from coarse simplicity to refined art—from the wood-notes wild of the Warwickshire player to the learned sock of the professional writer. Out of these elements of court, pulpit, diplomatic, theatrical morality, an art and science of morals was certain to be constructed; if it may not rather be said that they formed this art and science. And if it was ever reduced into a formal system, such as the age was always hankering after, what could this system be but one in which right and wrong, truth and falsehood, were not ultimate opposites?

Ethical science.

8. But in this region, again, what wonderful compensations were provided for any degeneracy such as we have hinted at! If the court morality was to lose all the nobleness which it had derived from the presence of a maiden Queen—if vulgarity was to be substituted for chivalry in high quarters—the fashion of the time would lead, by its very exaggeration, to a protest; the popular morality would acquire greater strength and consistency from that which it was opposing. Most interesting it is to trace through the reigns of James and Charles the struggle in the heart of the English gentleman of the House of Commons against the dissembling maxims to which the kings, by their acts and example, were giving encouragement; then the alternate combination and collision of this with the coarser morality of the trading citizen; then the mixture of both with the narrower, more technical, but still, in one aspect, more elevated morality of the Puritan divine; till, in the prose and poetical writings of Milton, we find all three blended into a stern virtue, which yet admits into it graces and refinements, which overlooks a hundred necessary restraints and wise traditions, but points to the serenest heights, and asks for the deepest foundations; which, wanting the Elizabethan freedom, geniality, catholicism, may yet be developed into a safer and more perfect catholicism—one in which the permanent is distinguished from the transitory—in which free scope is left for the conventions of each age, because nothing rests upon them. It is in the conflict of these different forces that we are to seek for that English morality which the Stuarts, if they had been left to their own devices, would have destroyed. The great question, what is to form the manners of a nation, what is to save them from perdition? was to be debated in this century more earnestly than it had ever been debated before. If the answer of any school, or sect, or man, had been taken, the practical result would have been, that they could not have been saved at all. A higher Ruler was causing all sects, opinions, men, by their wisdom and their follies, by their truths and their contradictions, to accomplish His ends.

Opposition to the court morality.

Elements of popular morality.

The ethics of Milton.

The result.

9. These, then, were the elements out of which English philo-

sophers were to extract their ethical systems, or by which they were to be guided to ethical principles. And though France, Italy, Germany, were all rich in eminent men, even in eminent philosophers, *the* department of ethics was more affected by the dogmas of our Malmesbury sage, by the opinions and theories which were begotten from his, and by the opposition which he called forth, than by those of all the contemporary European philosophers. Starting from England, and drawing his facts, examples, arguments, specially from what was passing in England, he yet found little to attach him to our soil; many of his speculations, we shall find, were matured under another sky, and amidst foreign associates. We limit the observation to ethics; for though in Hobbes they can never be severed from politics, there were, no doubt, branches of political science, especially that concerning international right, which were more assiduously cultivated in Holland than here. A longer debate may be raised upon the question, How far England could claim at this time pre-eminence in physical investigation? and upon that other, with which we are so often beset in this treatise, Whereabouts physical inquiries, here or elsewhere, come into contact with metaphysical?

Influence of English ethics.

Galilei and Bacon.

10. David Hume, it may be remembered, has expressed or at least indicated an opinion, that the name of Galilei is a more venerable one in science than that of Bacon. It is a curious position for the sceptic of all sceptics to have taken up, seeing that the man who could say confidently, "And yet the earth does move," was establishing an insolent audacity of conviction, while Bacon was cultivating hesitation and deliberation, and was carrying on a steady warfare with the dogmatists. Those who think that the world could have ill afforded to dispense with either of these great men, and who also think that they are particularly unsuitable subjects for comparison, may yet feel themselves obliged, as the question has been raised, to balance their different merits. That Galilei saw farther than Bacon, and shook off an old opinion which Bacon could not shake off, honest Englishmen will of course admit. And they will throw all the additional honour into the Italian scale that can be derived from the recollection of the difficulties with which the antagonist of a system, declared by an infallible authority to be divine, had to encounter—the public opinion and the positive persecution which the announcement of his conviction drew upon him. No such fame, of course, belongs to our countryman; no such hazard would have been incurred by him if he had thought otherwise of the heavenly bodies than Franciscans and Dominicans thought. But this very consideration will hinder them from making his slowness in embracing the Copernican

Wherein Galilei was the greater.

English slowness.

doctrine into a charge against him. They will rather. accept that charge as one which they are to bear with him; that which is called "slowness" being part of their customary unwillingness to embrace any conclusion—however it may recommend itself either to the imagination or to the reason, however many proofs it may be able to produce of its soundness, however many promises it may involve of more decisive proofs hereafter—till the truth of it has been reached by exact and legitimate steps. It was most important for Bacon's object, and therefore for the interests of science, that he should jump at nothing; that he should overset traditions not through impatience or the lust of change, but because they hindered the discovery and acknowledgment of facts; that in his battle with systems, he should never for one moment cease to be methodical.

Bacon's excellence.

His education prepared him not only to be an observer, but an experimentalist.

11. We have seen how the education of Bacon by lawyers and diplomatists, with an especial view to the profession of law and diplomacy, may have operated upon him unawares in his scientific studies, and may have helped to make him a scientific reformer. If we follow that thought a little way, it may enable us to perceive why he became not only a careful observer of special phenomena, but why he distrusted his own observations till he had discovered some test to which they could be subjected. Such a habit of mind was characteristic of the persons among whom he had dwelt; it belonged to them as men of the world. A single glaring point of evidence would never satisfy the legal inquirer. The counsel for the plaintiff and for the defendant must both be heard. The bias of witnesses to the right or the left, the minute indications of purposes, general or special, which made what they said credible or incredible, must pass into the crucible. The result might not be an exact one, but it would be an approximation to truth upon which it would be safe and wise to act. More subtle processes, less capable of being reduced under tangible and legible rules, were to be traced in the judgments of the politician upon those whom he sought as his agents, or upon the rival statesmen whom it was his business to counterplot. His over-subtlety must often have attracted the notice of a man like Bacon. He must have seen how the wise were taken in their own craftiness, how the excess of distrust wrought often all the effects of the most childish credulity. Why might not all these lessons be applied in a sphere where the disturbing influences cannot proceed from the objects contemplated, but must proceed from the mind of the contemplator? Why cannot he be warned of the different perversions to which that mind is exposed? Why cannot he be put in the way of looking with a straight, clear, *dry* eye at the thing as it is?

Practice of law.

Observation of character.

Physical and metaphysical inquirers.

12. Our object in throwing out these hints is partly to vindicate for English institutions and habits of mind the influence which in all thankfulness we ought to attribute to them, and which the devotees of science are in general rather disposed to ignore, partly to illustrate the causes of the opposition, as well as of the fellowship which we shall discover between their subject and our own in the seventeenth century. It has been the fashion with many to represent Bacon as the originator of what is called in cant language the *Sensualism* of this and of the following period. Others again, like Mr. Coleridge, have connected Bacon with Plato, notwithstanding his frequent denunciations of Plato, and have believed that he rendered the highest services to what in the same cant language is called *Super-naturalism.* These opposing opinions are very perplexing to the student; yet we believe the further he proceeds in his historical inquiries, the more he will understand the meaning and feel the reasonableness of both. With what vehemence Bacon turned away from all theological speculations respecting nature, is evinced by his language respecting Plato, and all who learnt their philosophy from the Timæus, all who ever dreamt of a cosmogony. For Socrates, as a questioner and a lover of the concrete, he might have some respect; for Socrates, as a deserter from the physical camp to the human, he had none whatever. How truly his object was to open the paths of sense, to bring the senses directly in contact with their objects, is evident from his express words, is implied in every one of his maxims. Here are the grounds upon which those who impute Sensualism to Bacon, as a merit or a reproach, may safely rest their case. Perhaps they may think that still stronger evidence in support of it is to be derived from the English psychologists who arose after his principles had begun to work; that the *Essay on the Human Understanding* is the proper commentary upon, and development of, the *Novum Organum.* This is a question that will have to be considered carefully hereafter: we must not anticipate the decision upon it. There is enough of plausibility, however, in it—enough of truth, be that truth limited as it may—to add weight to the previous evidence, and to leave a strong impression on the mind that all the influence which metaphysical studies received from Bacon was in the sensual direction.

Opposite notions of Bacon.

How far a founder of the school of Sensualism.

Bacon, in what sense a Platonizer.

13. What excuse, then, can there be for those who say of Bacon what Numenius said of Moses, that he *Platonizes?* Our previous history must resolve that doubt. We have seen that between the sensible and the spiritual world lay another, which may be called, if the reader pleases, the intellectual world, consisting of terms, conceptions, notions, generated afresh in parti-

cular minds, or forming the tradition of a series of minds. The questions which have occupied us most during the Middle Ages, and the years that have succeeded them, has been—whether *this* world shall assert an independent existence of its own? whether it shall claim both the other provinces as its tributaries? whether either of them shall be free from its yoke? whether either—and, if either, which—shall bring it into subjection? Ever since the time of Occam, the spiritual world has been trying, by one effort or another, to emancipate itself from the dominion of this middle world. Luther raised the standard of rebellion higher than all his predecessors, and won great regions from the tyrant. Amidst fierce protests and conflicts, much of the ground which scholasticism had lost has been recovered. The theologians have nearly given over the battle; Calvinists, Romanists, Anglicans, on different pretexts, are all willing to let Aristotle reign over them. Now is beginning the assault from the other side. The declaration goes forth that forms of the intellect have no rightful authority over the world of *Sense*. A number of men arise in different regions to aver that Aristotle is not king over *it*. We have a right to boast that Bacon was, through his English training, the most successful of all these warriors. That one consequence of his victory was the triumph of the senses over the intellect, the subjugation of the schools and their lore in a very great degree to the rules and maxims of sense—even to material interests; that the schools' struggle against this conqueror, if it gave rise to some valiant deeds, was not more successful than that of Athens against Philip, or of the Tyrol against Napoleon; we may also have to confess. Nay, if we look farther into the future, we may find not merely this intellectual region, but the spiritual world itself, which had so often been confounded with it, falling under the same rule. Nevertheless, those who believe that *that* is a real world, and that there are organs in man for apprehending it, will never cease to rejoice and give thanks for Bacon's birth and Bacon's work; because they discover therein the removal of one, and the prime, obstacle to the acknowledgment of this reality, to the exercise of those organs; because they believe that he was the destined invader of the Domdaniel caverns, and the destroyer of the magicians who dwelt in them—those magicians who had conspired to separate earth and heaven; because they think that in showing men a ladder by which they may rise from the lowest earthly facts to the highest physical truths, he also gave an assurance that there is a ladder between the poorest beggar-man and the highest spiritual existence—one upon which angels are ascending and descending. In *this* sense then it is reasonable to say, that Bacon was both Socratic and Platonic. On *this* ground we may reasonably hope

The three worlds.

The struggle for spiritual freedom.

Triumph of the senses.

Ultimate effects of the Baconian method.

that hereafter he will be found to have done as much for the metaphysical inquirer, as he has already done for the inquirer into nature.

Bacon under James I.

Hopes from the king.

How Bacon may take part in the work.

He stoops to conquer.

14. We have returned then to Bacon, whom we left in the Elizabethan period, working his way slowly into court reputation and legal practice, working steadily in his own mind for the great reformation which it was his call to accomplish. The coming of the learned king was no doubt hailed by him as the greatest step towards the fulfilment of both his aims. That he did not miscalculate the difference it would be to him in respect of the first, he had speedy evidence. Was he wrong in assuming that the king would be equally ready to promote the designs which lay nearer to his heart (so at least we believe), than his own place as attorney-general, or his possible chancellorship? It was surely not an error to suppose that James would sincerely, at least with all the sincerity he had, desire the production of books, and would favour the men who could produce them. Here was something to start from. The monarch's taste might be far from the best, his knowledge might be somewhat lumbering and not very available for the purposes of life. But with a wise man to guide him, who could tell how much his patronage might contribute to the cultivation of good arts—to the diffusion of real books, and not merely of a certain quantity of printed paper—to the collection of museums—to the intercourse of scholars—even to the arrangement of that which was confused in his own mind, and in the minds of his subjects—even to the emancipation of science from the scholastical fetters by which he himself was bound? Dreams surely not too vast for a man who had spent forty years of his life in a laborious education, to indulge in; dreams which at any rate he might do more than any other person in England to realize! Were not all the advantages of position, indefatigible industry, the resources of an exquisitely cultivated intellect, the capacity for advising, the knowledge of law, trusts to be used for such an end? Were not any means lawful in order to compass them? If the king was susceptible of flattery, if it was obvious to all that he could not appreciate what was refined, that the coarser it was the more it would be agreeable to him, was this little concession to be withheld? Was there not something patriotic in a philosopher's degrading himself that philosophy might be exalted? So thought the writer of the dedication to the books on *The Advancement of Learning*. Whether he thought rightly, whether the discreditable means were likely to farther the noble end, a little examination of that work may help to inform us.

15. The reader of this book is tempted to pass hastily over the dedication, supposing that it has nothing to do with the

substance of the book, and wishing to forget certain passages in it as soon as possible. But this course is clearly a wrong one—unjust to Bacon himself as well as to his argument. It is throughout an address to a king; *he* is to advance learning. He cannot remove all the impediments to its progress, but he can remove some of the most serious. If he sets that object before him, he will be in the line of all his great predecessors, he will be consolidating his throne, he will be attaching to him the wisest of the land. If we suppose that the main thought in Bacon's mind was to lay down a scheme of studies, we are utterly at a loss to account for the time and space which he expends in schoolboy stories about Alexander the Great and Julius Cæsar. We wonder why it should be necessary to descant upon the history of the different Roman emperors from Nerva to Marcus Aurelius; we wonder still more—and not without deep sorrow—that after a high, though not exaggerated, eulogy on the last prince, he should so falsify history as to affirm that the Christian Church had, on the whole, peace in his days. But all this, with the story of the prayer which Gregory the Great offered for the soul of Trajan, and its modified success, becomes an integral part of the design when we find that James himself is the key-stone of it—that whatever noble sentiments and weighty thoughts occur in the course of it, whatever hints are thrown out for which every private student may be the better, the moral of the whole is, that a wise monarch may give such a new impulse and direction to thought and investigation as all subjects together would strive in vain to give.

Advancement of Learning, published in 1605; translated into Latin, expanded into nine books, incorporated in the *Instauratio Magna*, 1624.

Peculiarities of the first book—how explained.

The book, in what respects inconsistent with Bacon's main purpose.

16. Those who have profited at all by the lessons of this book, or have found hints which showed them how they might have profited, and what cause they have for repenting of neglects, may scarcely dare to wish it in any respect other than it is. And yet one cannot help feeling that the author has been driven aside from the main purpose of his life—that the idea which has been pursuing him from his childhood is not as clearly before him now as it was in his earlier, as it became in his later, years. The arguments in behalf of learning against those who impugned it on theological or on political grounds are powerful and pregnant. Those who are fallen on an unlearned age appreciate the force of them, and may be thankful to use them. They have no right to say (for Bacon is a better judge than they can be) that it was not desirable to urge them even upon ears that were open to receive them, seeing that so much of wholesome medicine might be given in the treacle—seeing that it may be the most hopeful course to strengthen those convictions in men which are already awake. Bacon no doubt hoped to reform books and bookmakers by bringing them into contact with those

The reformation of pedants and Practical men.

An ingenious but doubtful policy as far as the fruits are concerned.

How James regarded this book, and the *Novum Organum*.

The counter-actions to servility and system will have been overlooked.

who were acting and ruling, as well as to raise the tone of the doers and rulers by help of the thinkers. This double intention is obvious enough through all his first book. One ought to interpret a great deal that might be construed into cringing and duplicity, in the better sense which this object suggests. But while he follows this game, is he not forgetting what significance the Court will give to his words? What will all that he tells them about the study of particulars avail to keep them from the generalities which they associate habitually with book-lore? If he insinuates now and then that the fires of the chemist may be more helpful in the discovery of facts than heaps of words, will that cautious hint have any other effect than to make the royal disciple think that any money he can save from his favourites may be bestowed with advantage upon the endowment of teachers who will sometimes lecture upon the facts of Nature as well as upon the forms of Logic? We know from the jest in which James, with characteristic profaneness, indulged, about the resemblance between his Chancellor's speculations and the peace of God, how far Bacon succeeded, with all his dexterity, in making the monarch apprehend his real purpose. That is, perhaps, of no great consequence. But it is of serious consequence if the hopeless experiment to achieve an insignificant result made the ultimate one less evident to the writer himself, and in some measure to all classes of his readers. There is no reason to believe that *this* treatise was not very acceptable to the person for whose use it was principally written. It was that later one which has changed the thought of Europe, that is said to have called forth the royal wit. The *Advancement of Learning* will have struck him, and probably the majority of those who perused it, as a subtle and elaborate defence of books and schoolmen, against such admirers of the wisdom derived from the experience and friction of the world as Burleigh and the men of the old school had been—as a skilful, and more or less successful attempt to make that encyclopædia of studies which the systematizers of the day were longing for—as a homage, above all, to arbitrary government, which would elevate literature and art into functions of government, while the popular and puritanical inclination was to throw them down. A man who could argue effectually for such theses as these might be forgiven, if, in the course of his pleading, he threw out *obiter dicta*, which were very dangerous to schoolmen, not at all favourable to artificial systems and arrangements, far from pleasant to the levity of courtiers, subversive of the creed of monarchs that their fancies are higher than laws.

Bacon's distribution of knowledge.

17. Though we ought not to assume that any English student needs information from us respecting the contents of this book,

we are bound to dwell a little upon that "General Distribution of Human Knowledge" which is found in the second part of it. We must remind the reader that, according to Bacon, "The parts of human learning have reference to the three parts of Man's understanding, which is the seat of learning : History to his memory, Poesy to his imagination, and Philosophy to his reason." Considering that we are at the beginning of a period in which the questions, what is the Understanding ? what is the Memory ? what is the Imagination ? above all, what is the Reason ? is that, or is it not, a part of the Understanding ? will be discussed with the utmost eagerness and ability by opposing thinkers, we can scarcely accept a classification which assumes all these inquiries to be concluded, which starts from the names as if the definitions of them were understood and accepted. If we believe that the Baconian maxims respecting names, definitions, classifications, which were soon to be proclaimed, are applicable to all subjects as well as to one, we must gravely protest against this startling violation of them. A great poet of our own day, who did not acquiesce in the limitation of Poesy to the Imagination, has brought his own works under divisions not altogether unlike these ; very much, it seems to us, to the detriment of those works, and to the confusion of his readers. We cannot think that a method which Mr. Wordsworth has unsuccessfully attempted on a small scale with reference to compositions the nature and parentage of which he could explain, can, under any modifications, and in the most skilful hands be adapted to the literature of the universe. And we much doubt whether any person who has been trying to understand how different studies are related to each other, has ever found *this* map of them for any long time serviceable to him ; whether his chief cause of thankfulness to the framer of it has not been, that he has been saved even from inventing any similarly comprehensive schemes for himself, because the man who was best of all fitted to invent one has utterly disappointed him.

Assumptions in it.

Not of much practical utility as a guide for the student.

Nevertheless highly suggestive.

18. In making this remark, we are not criticising Bacon. We are only saying where he fails to afford us the guidance which we seek from him. And the objection, even in that form, must be considerably modified. A great man's failures teach more than a little man's successes. If we complain of the general division as full of presumptions, therefore as not Baconian ; as involving cross divisions, therefore, in the ordinary sense of the word, as illogical ; if we find similar presumptions and cross divisions in all its subordinate parts ; we may, nevertheless, accept with much gratitude many of the hints which it suggests, many of the results to which it has led. Among both of these we may reckon

Importance given to History.

Divisions of History.

Divisions of Civil History

Of Ecclesiastical.

the new prominence which this division has given to History. In that Athenian division of studies into the musical or artistical, the grammatical, the geometrical, and the gymnastic, which is so full of instruction, the great defect appears to be the absence of any place for history, or the inevitable assignment of it to a partition in which it must be squeezed and contracted. In the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, history fell almost confessedly under the formulas of Ethics, of Politics, or of Physics. Whether it were political, biographical, or natural, it could not, under such conditions, have any free development. It was a great sign of what had been achieved by the Reformation in bringing sacred as well as ordinary history into the practical education of the world, that this subject, in Bacon's distribution, assumes not a secondary place, but the chief place of all. Exceptions might be taken to his principal division of history into civil and natural. But the more we meditate upon it, the more, probably, our complaints of it will be diminished; for the history of Cities and Citizens may take in the whole scope of human life, and Natural history, all the outlying world which Man is to investigate, and over which he is to rule. That civil history comprehends ecclesiastical may make Bacon's arrangement offensive to divines, and, if the purpose of it is mistaken, may lead to serious inconveniences; yet, considered from his point of view, it is not unreasonable. That the other two divisions of civil into literary and particular civil history exhaust the subject we cannot persuade ourselves, any more than that ecclesiastical history can be reduced into the general history of the Church, the history of Prophecy, and the history of Providence. Yet in this department, omitting the partitions of Natural History, which lie altogether out of our province, we should say that there was abundant compensation for the mischiefs into which a slavish acceptance of it would lead, in the wealth of thoughts which a careful and manly consideration of it would draw forth. And that even without reference to the comments which are contained in the subsequent part of the book.

The division of the Imagination.

Poetry of the denouncer of Poets.

19. We cannot conceive that the artists of any school would allow us to make a similar remark upon that part of the scheme which concerns the Imagination. The division of poems there seems to be especially wilful. The hints respecting the heathen fables, however, are full of interest as throwing light both upon the thoughts of his time and upon many striking characteristics in the style of Bacon himself. The enemy of poets was, we need scarcely say, the most illustrative of all writers, the richest in pregnant conceits, the man who might often be fairly accused of having tasted the demoniac wine, and even of exhibiting some signs of the intoxication which it produces. But our own busi-

ness is obviously with the third part of Bacon's distribution—that which falls under the head of Reason.

Book II.
The waters above and below the Firmament.

The question to which the illustration gives birth.

Objects of Philosophy.

The *Philosophia Prima.*

20. Bacon is nowhere more imaginative than when he passes out of the region of the Imagination into this region. "The knowledge of man is as the waters, some descending from above, and some springing from beneath; the one informed by the light of nature, the other inspired by Divine revelation. . . . So, then, according to these two different illuminations, or originals, knowledge is first of all divided into Divinity and Philosophy." How much is to be learnt from this division, how pregnant it is with thoughts and suggestions that must in due time be brought to light, all our later history will show. How much was implied in connecting *both* Divinity and Philosophy with the Reason, that being assumed to be susceptible of two different lights—one of them the light of Revelation—instead of being opposed to Revelation, as it has been by more careless systematizers,—will also appear hereafter. Yet surely there is a perplexity in the arrangement which the illustration makes more conspicuous. Are the waters that descend homogeneous with the waters that ascend? Does the light from within answer to the light that comes from above, or are they diverse in nature? Is Philosophy, the search after wisdom, met by a Divinity which imparts wisdom, or do they move in different directions, and never meet? These inquiries we must leave for the present. What we have to do with is philosophy, or the contemplations of man. These "either penetrate unto God, or are circumferred to nature, or are reflected or reverted upon himself. Out of which several inquiries there do arise three knowledges—Divine Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, and Human Philosophy, or Humanity. For all things are marked and stamped with this triple character of the peace of God, the difference of nature, and the use of man." Then comes this all-important passage, "But because the distributions and partitions of knowledge are not like several lines that meet in one angle, and so touch but in a point, but are like branches of a tree that meet in a stem which hath a dimension and quantity of entireness and continuance before it come to discontinue and break itself into arms and boughs; therefore it is good before we enter into the former distribution, to erect and constitute one universal science by the name of *Philosophia Prima,* primitive or summary Philosophy, as the main and common way, before we come where the ways part and divide themselves."

What it is.

21. After so splendid a preface, Bacon's account of this primary philosophy is perhaps disappointing. "It is to be a receptacle for all such profitable observations and axioms as fall not within the compass of any of the special parts of philosophy or sciences, but are more common, and have a higher stage." Thus the

The common maxims.

maxim, "add equals to unequals and the whole is unequal," or the maxim, "two things which agree with a third agree with each other," belong to moral as well as physical science; they are political as well as mathematical truths. "The Persian magic," says Bacon, "was a reduction or correspondence of the principles and architecture of nature to the rules and policy of government." Something more Divine and commanding than this, more answering to the position which Logic assumed in the Medieval studies, might have been expected. But what a world of analogies, what lights respecting the very nature and ground of analogy, open on us through the portholes of these common axioms! They supply proof enough how much the imagination of Bacon helps to make him the guide of men's intellectual inquiries.

Natural Philosophy.

Metaphysic.

How far like the old Metaphysic.

22. Passing by Bacon's observations on Natural Theology, in the treatment of which he is "so far from noticing any deficience, that he rather notes an excess," we come to Natural Philosophy which he divides into the "Inquisition of causes and the production of effects; speculative and operative; natural science and natural prudence." In the division of Natural Science into Physic and Metaphysic, and in his comments upon the arrangement, Bacon exhibits much of the "prudence" which belonged to his time and to his character. He tells his royal pupil that he has a dislike to novel terms; that even when he must depart a little from the sense of antiquity he would adhere reverently to its language; that herein he differs from "that excellent person Aristotle," who proceeded in a spirit of difference and contradiction towards his predecessors. Never, certainly, was a revolution against existing formulas made so acceptable to a conservative taste. Metaphysic being distinguished from the Primary Philosophy on the one side, and from Natural Theology on the other, and being made only a department of Natural Science, is clearly denuded of all its ancient glory. Bacon, however, would "preserve thus much of the conceit of antiquity, that Physic should contemplate that which is inherent in matter, and therefore transitory; and Metaphysic, that which is abstracted and fixed. And again, that Physic should handle that which supposeth in Nature only a being and moving; and Metaphysic should handle that which supposeth further in Nature a reason, understanding, and platform." If pure Ontology disappears in this arrangement, we get in place of it a kind of mixed Ontology—a basis for Nature to rest upon. Whether this compromise was good or not in itself, it was characteristic of the seventeenth century, and was to have very important effects upon the philosophical movements in the latter part of it. Illustrating it further, he observes, that "Physic is situate in a middle term or distance between Natural

History and Metaphysic. For Natural History describeth the variety of things; Physic, the causes—but variable or respective causes; and Metaphysic, the fixed and constant causes. Fire is the cause of induration, but respective to clay; fire is the cause of colliquation, but respective to wax. But fire is no constant cause either of induration or colliquation; so, then, the physical causes are but the efficient and the matter."

Essential Forms—how far cognizable by man.

The Scale of Creatures.

Objection to the assumption of final causes or adaptations.

Political argument.

23. Having assigned to Metaphysic the inquiry into formal and final causes, the question is forced upon Bacon, whether "the inquisition of man is competent to find out essential forms or true differences?" He agrees with Plato that Forms are the true object of knowledge. He thinks that Plato "lost the real fruit of his opinion by considering of forms as absolutely abstracted from Matter, and not confined and determined by Matter." There must be no hasty pursuit after this knowledge; here, as everywhere, men have precipitately fled from particulars into generals. But if they are willing to move quietly, they may look for the reward of arriving, through Natural History and Physic, to that "vertical point" which is Metaphysic. The Platonic idea of a scale of creatures ascending to Unity commends itself to the mind of our sage, little as he cares for mere speculation. Indeed, so far from treating the pursuit of original forms as mere phantasy, he says that that "which valueth and commendeth this part of Metaphysic, is that it doth enfranchise the power of man unto the greatest liberty and possibility of works and effects." Of that part which refers to final causes he speaks differently. He complains not only of Plato but of Aristotle and Galen, for falling "upon these flats." "For to say that the hairs of the eye-lid are for a quickset and fence about the sight, or that the firmness of the skins and hides of living creatures is to defend them from the extremities of heat or cold, . . . and the like, is well inquired and collected in Metaphysic, but in Physic is impertinent. Nay, these are indeed but remoras and hindrances to stay and slug the ship from further sailing, and have brought this to pass, that the search for the physical causes hath been neglected and passed in silence." For physical purposes, therefore, he prefers Democritus and the Atomists to Plato or Aristotle, because the one mixed theological, and the other logical, reasons with simple investigations. He vindicates himself very characteristically from the charge of derogating from Divine Providence by this apparent slighting of the evidences which nature furnishes for it. "For, as in civil actions, he is the greater and deeper politician that can make other men the instruments of his will and ends, and yet never acquaint them with his purpose, so as they shall do it and yet not know what they do, than he who imparteth his meaning

to those he employeth; so is the Wisdom of God more admirable when Nature intendeth one thing and Providence draweth forth another, than if He had communicated to particular creatures and motions characters and impressions of His Providence." These warnings against a kind of study which has usurped a dangerous pre-eminence in some of our popular writers of later times is profitable for us, and the argument for it powerful; though it need not have been commended to James by a comparison which would strengthen him in his previous conviction, that the subtlety of the Divine arrangements had a close resemblance to his own kingcraft.

Mathematics.

24. Bacon regards the Mathematic as a branch of the Metaphysic—an opinion which is intelligible enough if we adopt his definition of Metaphysic. He is strong as to "the excellent use of pure Mathematics, in that they do remedy and cure many defects in the wit and faculties intellectual. For if the wit be dull, they sharpen it; if too wandering, they fix it; if too inherent in the sense, they abstract it." Respecting the mixed Mathematics, he only predicts that there must be more kinds of them as Nature unfolds herself more. The operative part of Natural Philosophy he divides into three parts—experimental, philosophical, and magical. The second part of course is, in his judgment, very subordinate to the first. The third being separated from all "credulous and superstitious conceits and observations of sympathies and antipathies, and hidden properties," is only experiment in its highest kind and development; so that the student is here on the precincts of the *Novum Organum*, and should learn Bacon's meaning from that treatise rather than from this. What remains is to speak of Human Philosophy or Humanity, "which hath two parts. The one considereth man segregate, or distributively; the other, congregate, or in society."

The operative part of Natural Philosophy.

Human Philosophy.

25. The arrangement of this great subject is introduced by the precious admonition "that all partitions of knowledges be accepted rather for lines and veins than for sections and separations, and that the continuance and entireness of knowledge be preserved." The hint is specially necessary for Bacon's purpose, seeing that, under the general title of Humanity, his object is to bring out "the sympathies and concordances between the mind and body, which, being mixed, cannot be properly assigned to the sciences of either." "This league of mind and body," he says, "hath these two parts; how the one discloseth the other, and how the one worketh upon the other; Discovery and Impression." Discovery, he says, has given rise to two arts, the first, "Physiognomy, which discovereth the disposition of the mind by the lineaments of the body; the second, the exposition of natural dreams, which discovereth the state of the body

Mind and body revealing each other, and acting upon each other.

by the imaginations of the mind." To the latter branch, concerning Impression, he refers all the efforts of the physician "to prescribe cures of the mind in frenzies and melancholy passions, or to exhibit medicines which exhilarate the mind, to confirm the courage, to clarify the wits; as also all the discipline of religions teachers respecting fasting, abstinence, and humiliations of the body." To the full study of the interdependence of the body and the mind, he says, "the consideration of the seats and domiciles which the several faculties of the mind do take and occupate in the organs of the body," is highly important. He would not discard any of the old hints respecting the connection of the understanding with the brain; of passion (animosity in its larger sense), with the heart; of concupiscence with the liver; but neither will he accept these notions except as hints for inquiry.

Relations of tempers of the mind to parts of the body.

26. The body and mind having been thus considered together, our next business is to treat them separately. "The knowledges" that appertain to the body are, the Medicinal, the Cosmetic, the Athletic, and the Voluptuary. On these we must not venture to dwell, but must proceed to the second branch of the subject. "Human knowledge which concerns the mind hath two parts; the one that inquireth of the substance or nature of the soul or mind; the other, that inquireth of the faculties or functions thereof." The first inquiry cannot be separated, Bacon says, from Revelation, or as he expresses it rather strangely, "It is not possible that the soul should be otherwise than by accident subject to the laws of Heaven and earth, which are the subject of philosophy." There are two "appendixes" to this study, upon which Bacon descants, and to the last of which especially the recent observations and theories of Animal Magnetists have given an interest—*Divination* and *Fascination*. What is chiefly noticeable is, that he is never satisfied with the vulgar resource of referring the facts that fall under these divisions to the fancy or the imagination. He takes it for granted that the imagination must have its own laws, and that these require to be investigated. There are few passages in the whole treatise which deserve better to be considered at this time than the one which refers to these topics; so much does it anticipate of after-speculations, so much useful suggestion does it offer as to the method of dealing with them. With this must be connected the opening of the next division, wherein the Imagination is spoken of as an "agent or nucleus in both the judicial and the ministerial provinces of the mind;" "as a Janus with a face towards Reason, which hath the print of truth; and a face towards Action, which hath the print of good." Such remarks are subsidiary to the main subject, which is the division of our faculties.

The body and mind apart from each other.

Substance and faculties of the mind.

Divination and fascination.

The double aspect of Imagination.

The faculties —how divided.

27. The primary division is into the Rational and the Moral. "The former produce direction or decree; the latter, action or execution." The part of philosophy which belongs to the rational faculties is distasteful, he says, to "most men, who are of the taste and stomach of the Israelites in the desert, that would fain have returned *ad ollas carnium*, and were weary of manna, which, though it were celestial, yet seemed less nutritive and comfortable. So generally men taste well knowledges that are drenched in flesh and blood, Civil History, Morality, Policy, about the which men's affections, praises, fortunes do turn and are conversant; but this same *lumen siccum* doth parch and offend most men's watery and soft natures." These rational knowledges, however, are the keys of all other arts. He reduces them to four—the art of Inquiry or Invention; the art of Examination or Judgment; the art of Custody or Memory; the art of Elocution or Tradition. The subject of Invention, of course, introduces all that is most specially Baconian. How men have arrived at discoveries rather by chance than by method; how they have "hasted to their theories and dogmaticals, and have been imperious and scornful towards particulars, which their manner has been to use as serjeants and whifflers to make way and make room for their opinions;" how, "in human as in divine truth, men cannot endure to become children," is hinted here; the development of such excellent remarks is reserved for the books on the interpretation of nature. Much in the treatment on the art of Judgment must also be deferred; for Bacon cannot admit that the exercise of judgment is comprehended in the account of it which is given by mere logicians. That exquisite critical faculty which he had observed in his father, and in the acute Elizabethan statesmen—that faculty which he desired to transfer to the investigation of the facts of the universe—was not the judgment by syllogism. He gives this, however, all due honour —perhaps still higher honour to the elenchic method for the discovery of fallacies and sophisms; which, he says, is excellently handled in precept by Aristotle, but more excellently in examples by Plato. To this head he thinks much which logicians and metaphysicians have invented for other purposes may be referred. The divisions and arrangements which often embarrass the inquirer may be turned into wise cautions against ambiguity of speech. "The distribution of things into certain tribes—which we call categories or predicaments—may be but cautions against the confusion of definitions and divisions." If we have complained a little of Bacon for the over-conciliatory tone of some parts of this treatise, we are bound to say that in this portion of it his prudence is akin to the highest wisdom: nay, that he avoids an injustice into which he was sometimes

Arts that have their origin in the rational faculties.

Invention.

Judgment.

The Socratic method of detecting fallacies.

Justice to Logic.

betrayed in his later writings, when he was more directly defying the logicians. His deference to the prejudices of the king counteracts his prejudice against the old philosophers. He vindicates a place for the very abstractions and divisions from which he is seeking to emancipate himself. He protests, by anticipation, against the extravagance of those disciples of his own who, in after-times, should treat the school distinctions as of no worth. Proceeding in the same course, he treats, under this head of judgment, of that "profound kind of fallacies" which, under the name of Idols, occupy so large a space in the first book of the *Novum Organum;* and then he sums up with a most valuable hint respecting that part of judgment which assigns "differing kinds of proofs to differing kinds of subjects." The confusion of these—the demand of evidence in one case which is only suitable to another—he reports as one of the greatest causes of detriment and hindrance to knowledge. Idols.

28. The few remarks that are made on the third subject—the custody of knowledge in the memory—the defence of commonplace books, and the ridicule of the ordinary attempts to create a technical memory; above all, the distinction of the two intentions of the art of memory into pre-notion and emblem—have all the pregnancy which one expects in Bacon. The fourth subject, of Tradition, which contains three parts—the first concerning the organ of tradition; the second, the method of tradition; the third, the illustration of tradition—includes very important topics. To the first head belongs the consideration of hieroglyphics, arbitrary characters, grammar. To the second, which is immeasurably the most valuable, belong all the forms in which facts, opinions, discoveries are handed down; some, therefore, of the greatest impediments to the progression of knowledge. One striking sentence contains the pith of this division. "For it is in knowledges as it is in plants. If you mean to use the plant, it is no matter for the roots. But if you mean to remove it to grow, then it is more assured to rest upon roots than slips. So the delivery of knowledges as it is now used, is as fair bodies of trees without the roots—good for the carpenter, but not for the planter." The third part includes the subject of rhetoric, on which it seems to us that Bacon discourses more largely than was necessary. Arts of Memory. Tradition. Growth from slips and roots.

29. Moral Philosophy, or "that knowledge which considereth of the appetite and will of man," is our next topic. The subject is divided into "the exemplar or platform of good, and the regiment or culture of the mind." In treating of the exemplar of good, the anti-Platonical side of Bacon's mind manifests itself along with all the practical and political tendencies of his age. He thinks that all the disputations concerning the highest good Morals.

are "discharged by the Christian faith." *Discharged*, observe, not *fulfilled*. For when Bacon goes on to speak of the Christian's hope, he describes it vaguely as the hope of the future world—not as David or St. Paul would have done, the hope of waking up in the likeness of God, and being satisfied with it. Nowhere more strikingly than in this part of the treatise does one discover the passage into the divinity and philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; the new meaning which was to be put upon the words Heaven and Immortality. But as there is a counteraction of all these downward tendencies, in Bacon's aspirations after Truth in nature, and in his belief that there is a way to discover it, so is there also a counteraction in his conviction that the ends of our life are social, and not individual—that the man who aims at the well-being of his country is essentially more moral than he who seeks his own either in the court or the cloister. The protest on behalf of the political life in opposition to the monastic, comes out here in connection with a general exaltation of active, and disparagement of contemplative, life. Unfortunately it *is* a protest against errors, more than an assertion of truth. It occurs in a place where one would least wish to find it. For if the exemplar of good be ever so much a being who confers good, and who goes about doing good, still surely there must be contemplation to perceive and embrace that good. And, *more suo*, Bacon introduces conceits to make any weakness in his course of thought less palpable, as well as to make what is worthy in it acceptable. "So we see Enoch, the seventh from Adam, who was the first contemplative, and walked with God, yet did also endow the Church with prophecy, which St. Jude citeth." Subject to this observation, and to the doubt whether Bacon's position does settle all the controversies with philosophers which he supposes it to settle, we may cheerfully admit the great richness and worth of these hints on Moral Philosophy.

Bacon's Divinity.

Political and Monastic life.

Enoch.

30. The grand distinction of Bacon is into private or particular and general or communicative good. Private is again divided into the active and passive good; the passive into the conservative and the perfective. To the social or communicative good, he refers the idea of duty, "because the term of duty is more proper to a mind well framed and disposed towards others, as the term of virtue is applied to a mind well formed and composed in itself; though neither can a man understand virtue without some relation to society, nor duty without an inward disposition." This distinction suggests the next, between the common duty of every man as a man or member of a state, and the respective or special duty of every man in his profession, vocation, and place. Many will doubt if this is

Duty.

an exhaustive division; few will deny the imperfection of Bacon's treatment of the second part of the subject. It gives occasion to a melancholy and characteristic piece of flattery respecting his Majesty's "excellent book touching the duty of a king—a work richly compounded of divinity, morality, and policy, with great aspersion of all other arts," &c., &c. The praise becomes so fulsome that the author makes one of his quaint apologies for it. He is not "moved with certain courtly decencies which esteem it flattery to praise in presence. No, it is flattery to praise in absence, *i. e.*, when either the virtue is absent or the occasion is absent; and so the praise is not natural but forced, either in truth or in time." The king having so successfully expounded the requirements of his own profession, Bacon dwells little upon any other. He wishes, however, that there should be books respecting "the frauds, cautels, impostures, and vices of every profession," handling them "not in a satire and cynically, but seriously and wisely. . . . . For as the fable goeth of the basilisk, that if he see you first you die for it, but if you see him first he dieth, so it is with deceits and evil arts, which if they be first espied lose their life; but if they prevent they endanger." Then follows a somewhat questionable commendation of "Machiavel and others that write what men do, and not what they ought to do; for it is not possible to join serpentine wisdom with the columbine innocency, except men know exactly all the conditions of the serpent, his baseness and going upon his belly, his volubility and lubricity, his envy and sting, and the rest, *i. e.*, all forms and natures of evil; for without this, virtue lieth open and unfenced." All this, it must be remembered, belongs to "the general part touching the exemplar and description of Good"! Under which head he dismisses, in a single sentence, "the duties between husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, the laws of friendship and gratitude, the civil bond of companies, colleges, and politic bodies, of neighbourhood, and all other proportionate duties, not as they are parts of government and society, but as to the framing of the mind of particular persons."

The Royal Professor.

Knowledge of Evil.

Connected with the Exemplar of Good.

31. The reader will perhaps agree with us that it is satisfactory to escape from the part of Moral Philosophy which is thus rapidly and superficially, however cleverly, handled, to that which concerns the culture of the mind. "The first article of this knowledge," according to Bacon, "is to set down sound and true distributions and descriptions of the several characters and tempers of men's natures and dispositions, especially having regard to those differences which are most radical in being the fountains and causes of the rest, or most frequent in concurrence or commixture." Next we are to observe "those impres-

Culture of the Mind.

Observations of differences.

sions of nature which are imposed upon the mind by the sex, by the age, by the region, by health and sickness, by beauty and deformity, and the like, which are inherent and not extern, and again those which are caused by extern fortune, as sovereignty, nobility, obscure birth, riches, want, magistracy, privateness, prosperity, adversity, constant fortune, variable fortune, rising *per saltum*, *per gradus*, and the like." Then follows the inquiry touching the affections, in which Bacon complains that Aristotle is entirely deficient. Next come those points which are "within our own comment, and have force and operation upon the mind to affect the will and appetite, and to alter manners." To this most comprehensive head are referred "custom, exercise, habit, education, example, imitation, emulation, company, friends, praise, reproof, exhortation, fame, laws, books, studies." It is scarcely fair for a writer who has introduced so many cross-divisions as we find here, to complain of Aristotle either for his arrangements or his omissions. Certainly the objection to him that if he made "virtues and vices consist in habit, he ought so much the more to have taught the manner of superinducing that habit," is not one that will commend itself to a careful student of the Nicomachæan Ethics. What do they abound in more than in hints and precepts directed to this very end? And not by any means such precepts or hints as this of Bacon, that "we beware we take not at the first either *too* high a strain or *too* weak." It might be desirable, one would think, to avoid that which is either too high or too weak both first and last. With a few sentences respecting Love or Charity, scarcely worthy of him, or of the subject, Bacon concludes this part of moral knowledge, and indeed that "general part of Human Philosophy which contemplateth man segregate, and as he consisteth of body and spirit." That in discussing it he has had only the use of his left hand, we may, perhaps, be obliged to confess. And yet how much more he accomplishes with that left hand than most men with the right!

Affections.

Bacon's complaint of Aristotle unreasonable.

Civil Knowledge.

32. The last branch of Human Philosophy is comprehended under the name of Civil Knowledge. "It is conversant about a subject which, of all others, is most immersed in matter, and is hardliest reduced to axiom." The distinction between it and Moral Philosophy is, that the first "propoundeth to itself the framing of internal goodness; but civil knowledge requireth only an external goodness." This knowledge is divided into three parts, Conversation, Negociation, Government. What we have to thank Bacon for here, as in the Essays, is, that he does not allow us always to creep along the ground; nay, that even when he is speaking of prudence there is a respect, secret or confessed, to that wisdom of which it is the handmaid.

Divisions of it.

Political craft must always occupy a considerable place even in the most meagre analysis of the *Advancement of Learning*, the object of it being, as we have shown throughout, to sway and educate the mind of the king; the policy and inclination of Bacon being equally to exalt that in which the king thought himself superior to all other men. And when one is trying to estimate Bacon's influence upon subsequent generations, his passion for civil knowledge—the diplomatic side of his character—must surely come in for a very large item in the account. There are several reasons for resolutely refusing to accept it as the largest item. *First*, because the events which shook the throne of the Stuarts tended to merge mere policy in the higher morality; *secondly*, because among those who had most disposition and ability to exalt policy into a power, it assumed a general and metaphysical rather than a specific and experimental form; *thirdly*, because Bacon's zeal in the investigation of nature translated his policy to another level, deprived it of its sordid characteristics, subordinated it to the steady pursuit of truth.

Bacon's love of policy great, but not supreme in his mind.

33. The last pages of the *Advancement of Learning* are devoted to Divinity, "the Sabbath and port of all men's labours and peregrinations." There is much in the observations of such a man from which every divine, we should suppose, must be able to derive guidance, reproof, and strength for his work, and these of a kind which he is not likely to obtain from a teacher of his own profession. But we can scarcely speak of Bacon's treatment of the subject as Sabbatical, or as showing the end of our peregrinations. Hints there are about the way to unity, which may have been useful in his day, and may be more useful in ours. But they were written at the beginning of a century which was to exhibit more strife, division, sectarianism, than any previous one. Nor can we discover any directions in Bacon respecting the treatment and avoidance of controversies which could have averted this result, except at the price of some aspect of truth being less prominently brought into view; of some great experiment being omitted, which was as necessary as any experiment in the world of physics for the overthrow of idols and the discovery of principles. Nothing, surely, that was ever written by a wise man for a wise purpose has been in vain. We suspect, however, that Bacon really helped the theologian far more when he was occupied with the elucidation of an honest method in the region which he was specially called and gifted to explore, than when he was reducing Divinity into its different branches of "faith, manners, liturgy, and government," or reducing the declinations from religion into "atheism, heresies, idolatry, and witchcraft." In this portion of the *Advancement of Learning*, as in all which precede it, we cannot help perceiving that the

The highest knowledge.

The treatment of it not satisfactory.

Bacon's Theology in his investigations of Nature.

lust of arrangement, and the infection of that system-building, which was the disease of the age, were struggling in the writer's mind with the apprehension of a beautiful order which is not man's but God's; even as in the last words of the whole treatise one traces that double motive and double worship from which the greatest philosopher of the period was as little free as its greatest divines. "The good of my treatise, if any be, is due *tanquam adeps sacrificii* to be incensed to the honour, first, of the Divine Majesty; and, next, of your Majesty, unto whom, on earth, I am most bounden."

The fat of the sacrifice; to whom presented.

34. It will be obvious, from what we have said, that we do not rate this celebrated book as the greatest achievement of Bacon, marvellous though it is. But in such a sketch as this it must assume a prominence which belongs to no other, seeing that part of it is devoted to our proper subjects, and that it attempts to assign them their place among studies. In another form—the two books having expanded into nine,—in another language,—the rich and lively English having passed into somewhat less expressive Latin,—it appeared again as part of the *Instauratio Magna*, the *Novum Organum* forming the second part of that work. To the whole of it the memorable words were prefixed : *Franciscus de Verulamio sic cogitavit talemque apud se rationem instituit quam viventibus et posteris notam fieri ipsorum interesse putavit.* The first words in the new part of it were, *Homo Naturæ minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit, quantum de naturæ ordine re vel mente observaverit; nec amplius scit, aut potest.* The proudest of all the utterances of a man of genius is the preparation for the humblest. Every man living, and to come, should take an interest in knowing the thoughts of Francis of Verulam, because those thoughts teach him that his only safe posture is that of a servant and interpreter; that his capacity of knowing and doing is determined by that which discovers itself to him. There was no exaggeration in his estimate of the good he might be the instrument of conferring on the world; but it might be needful for him who formed the estimate to be taught the other part of the lesson—to discover that he was best when he was lowest. How the king delighted to honour him who had brought him the fat of the sacrifice!—What dignities and titles poured in after the year 1605!—Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Keeper of the Great Seal, Lord High Chancellor, Viscount St. Albans,—never, surely, was man who so vindicated the glory of Science and of Letters. And amidst the distractions of law courts and parliaments, the solicitations of private suitors, the service of the palace, the great work was never forgotten—Bacon kept the "thread of the labyrinth" firmly in his hand. As a Cambridge

De Augmentis Scientiarum, in nine books; first part of the *Instauratio*.

His grandeur

student he had detected the vanity of those who tried to bind the universe by their laws, instead of learning its laws. As the chief subject of England he was able to bring out that doctrine in its full power. Yes, and to be a witness in his own person that the chief subject of the land is a servant of laws, and must be crushed by them if he transgresses them. There are those who talk of his fall from greatness as if that proved him to be the meanest of mankind—as if that gave us a warrant for lifting ourselves above him. If it be said that, in the hour of prosperity, he yielded to temptations which very few had resisted—if it be urged that he was more, not less likely to feel those temptations because he was divided between two services, and because he had courted power, half for the sake of science, half for its own sake—the moral is precious, the lesson may be taken home by all whom it concerns; and there are few whom it does not concern. But to regard the *discovery* of his sin, the casting away of the false glitter which had covered him, his frank confession, his disgrace in the sight of rivals, servants, parliament, king, as anything but a gracious judgment on him, and an excuse for our recovering that sympathy with him, which all our admiration for his gifts will not secure him—is to draw upon ourselves the fearful sentence, "*With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; with what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you again.*" Bacon the magnificent might be fit to lay down the chart of all knowledge; Bacon the despised seems fitter to guide patient and foot-sore pilgrims through tangled roads, amidst dangers arising from their own presumption, into a region of light. And this is, at last, the true glory of the *Novum Organum*. When its author has been put forward as the originator of a scheme of thought and speculation, as himself a great natural discoverer, not only enemies but friends have disputed his pretensions. But when it is affirmed, that he persuaded students to be students, and not doctors—to question Nature about her ways, and not to impose their own upon her—that he pointed out perils to which his own age was not more liable than ours, which each thinker has to discover again for himself, and to fight with for himself; certainly a much higher demand has been made upon our reverence; and yet one which those who have most scientific insight and experience are least disposed to dispute; which we trust that ages of laborious, self-suspecting, successful investigations will thankfully ratify.

His fall.

Lessons contained in it.

The humbled man the truly scientific man.

35. Ritter, in his *History of Philosophy*, adopts, as we might expect him to do, the usual charges against Bacon, sustaining his opinion by what he considers the confessions of English critics and biographers. He perhaps was not aware how exceedingly ready English critics and biographers are to confess the

Ritter's *Geschichte der neuern Philosophie*, B. 10., p. 315. See the references in Note 2.

Foreigners often more equitable judges than natives.

P. 318. Für die Kirche England's giebt er seine Liebe zu erkennen, wie für den Christlichen Glaube; aber seine Liebe für Christenthum wird sehr verdächtig wenn man seine Christlichen Paradoxen liest. And see Note I.

Bacon was bound by his professions not to flinch at the sight of paradoxes.

sins of the great men whom their country has produced; how much they consider it an evidence of their own virtue to parade them; how prone they are to treat all palliating statements respecting the trials to which the offenders were exposed, and to which we, the censors, are not exposed, as apologies for crimes, and insults to their judicial strictness. Even evidence as to the nature of the crime—positive confutations of particular points that aggravate its enormity—will be listened to with much righteous indignation; the public will be told that its moral sense is in danger if such special pleas are not discarded. If the whole of a man's life is to be taken into account, if one part of it is to be weighed against another, foreigners will be safer in trusting to their own instincts, and in studying the facts for themselves, than in accepting the frank concessions of the candid native friend. But in one instance Ritter has received a very injurious impression from a writing of Bacon's, which we think, or at least hope, that few Englishmen would be disposed to share. The collection of Christian paradoxes attributed to Bacon, convinces his German commentator that he was an infidel. He supposes that book to have come to light without the intention of the author, and to reveal sentiments which all his life he was trying to disguise. Were it so, much more of course would be proved than that he rejected Christianity. He must have been an ingrained hypocrite, professing in the most serious of his philosophical works to be asking help and guidance which he did not ask—to be worshipping a Being in whom he did not believe. Those who *can* form this judgment of one from whom they and the world have learnt so much, are at liberty to form it. No arguments of ours could be of the least avail to shake them in their conclusion. But it must be one which they bring with them to the study of the paradoxes; not one which they derive from it. One great part of Bacon's task was to teach men that they ought to face the paradoxes in the natural world, and not to dispose of them by their anticipations and prejudices. He had to show us that the full truth lies behind the apparent oppositions, and that if you shrink from them you will never arrive at that which they conceal. Is it a proof that he denied the existence of a spiritual world if he thought the same law was discernible there? Is it a proof that he did not accept the Christian Scriptures as an interpretation of that world if he discovered in them a frank statement of these paradoxes? May he not have paid a homage to them by assuming that they did for their region what he would have every faithful investigator of the physical universe do in his? The last editor of Bacon considers the Paradoxes to be spurious. But he wisely regards them as the production of an over zealous Christian; not of an unbeliever.

Bacon's Friends.

Ben Jonson.

Bacon's countenance.

It explains his sympathy with a clever painter of manners.

36. What the influence of an eminent man was upon his contemporaries, how far they appreciated him, or judged him amiss, can never be satisfactorily ascertained. Rich as the eighteenth century is in memoirs and anecdotes, there are still disputes about the relations of the philosophers and men of letters who adorned it, to each other, as well as about their estimation by the general public. The nineteenth century will probably furnish as many puzzles for the time to come. The age of the Stuarts is not likely to be more intelligible than that of the Brunswicks. Among the eminent men of James's time it seems clear that Bacon could claim Ben Jonson as a friend. The dramatist could foresee his future power and influence more clearly than most of the philosophers or divines, the lawyers or the statesmen. If one assigned Bacon the enormously expansive forehead, and calm, judicial, inexpressive countenance which the traditional portraits claim for him, one could not understand what was the point of sympathy between him and the shrewd, skilful describer of manners, the learned constructor of plots, who represents the temper of his own times so admirably, but can never be thought, like Shakespeare, to understand and embody the spirit of all times. But the statue of Bacon, which is to adorn the new museum at Oxford, and which is founded upon an accurate study of the most credible likenesses, gives an entirely different representation of the man; one far more corresponding, as we think, to his life and writings—one in which we easily recognize the friend of the author of "Volpone" and of "Every Man in his Humour." The head in this statue is that of the shrewdest burrower after facts, the discerner of sharp and delicate contrasts or resemblances, capable of much humour, always sagacious, sometimes genial. There was foundation enough here for intercourse between the two men—intercourse perhaps the more pleasant because the direction of their minds was so different. The statesman and the comedian were fellow explorers of the same mine, without being rivals. The poet could admire the application of some of his own special gifts, and the marvellous results to which it led in the investigation of nature. But Jonson lies out of our sphere. There was a man who comes most strictly within it, who also conversed with Bacon, and learnt from him—what lessons it will now behove us to consider.

THOMAS HOBBES—His Autobiography.

37. In the short Latin autobiography which Thomas Hobbes bequeathed to posterity, there is no allusion to his acquaintance with Bacon. Neither is there any to his own father or mother. The omissions are characteristic. He was not careful to tell us

what influences had contributed, in any degree, to the moulding of his mind. He is willing that we should know with whom he conversed when it was already moulded, and what he did for the moulding of other minds. Perhaps it is better, on the whole, to follow his own lead, and to record the particulars of his history which he has thought it worth while to preserve. The narrative, as one would expect, includes no collateral or accidental topics; is free from any affectation of modesty; is hard, simple, manly. It tells us that he was born at Malmesbury in 1588; that he went to Oxford when he was fourteen years of age; that he spent five years there, devoting his attention to the logic and physics of Aristotle; that, at twenty, he was engaged by Lord Walter Cavendish—afterwards Baron Hardwick and Count of Devonshire—to educate his eldest son; that he pleased both the father and the young heir by his moderation, his diligence, his cheerfulness; that he then travelled in France and Italy, and made himself acquainted with the languages of both. Whilst he was engaged in these occupations, he tells us that he lost a great part of the classical lore which he had acquired at the University; that he devoted himself to the task of recovering it; that being discontented with the Aristotelian philosophy, which had occupied him there, he gave himself to the poets and historians of Greece, and learnt to write Latin, not floridly, but for use. In the year 1628 he saw, he says, to what point events in England were tending. He published his translation of Thucydides, that the absurdities of the Athenian democrats might be made known to his fellow-citizens.

His first studies.

A Tutor.

A student of History and Poetry.

Thucydides.

38. Hobbes was now forty years of age. He lost both his pupil and his pupil's father; went with a son of Sir Gervase Clifton to Paris, and there began earnestly to study Euclid—not for the sake of the results, but of the demonstrations. In 1631 he returned into the Cavendish family, and again went to Paris with the son of the Countess, a boy of thirteen. At Paris he gave himself to Natural Science—"seeking, first of all, to know what that kind of motion might be which produces the phantasms of the senses and of the understanding, and the other properties of animals." His most intimate friend at this time was Father Mersenne, of the Order of the Friars Minimi. Mersenne, in all respects a considerable and interesting man himself, who, in his commentary upon Genesis, had made a somewhat vehement attack upon atheists, and had given that name to many persons not deserving of it, appears to have shared the most intimate confidence of the English philosopher. Hobbes returned with his pupil to England in 1637. Then, seeing the civil war to be impending, he

Studies Euclid.

Mersenne.

Leaves England to avoid the Civil War.

betook himself to Paris about the same time in which Milton, for the same reason, abandoned his project of going to Greece and returned to England. While Royalists and Parliamentarians were fighting in his own land, Hobbes was sharing his thoughts with Mersenne, Gassendi, and other eminent Frenchmen. He was in correspondence with Descartes, though there is no allusion to his relations or differences with him in the autobiography. In 1646 he wrote his book *De Cive.* It commended him to Charles and the Royalists who were living at Paris; and Hobbes had the curious occupation of reading Mathematics with the Prince. Shortly after the death of the king he wrote *The Leviathan*, the sheets of which were carried to England, and published there in 1651.

The Leviathan.

39. We must hear Hobbes's own account of this book before we give any report of it ourselves. In it he says "he so set forth the right of the king, as well spiritual as temporal, not only by general reasonings, but by the authority of the Holy Scriptures, as to make it evident that there could not be permanent peace anywhere in the Christian world unless either his doctrine were received, or there were a sufficiently strong army to establish peace by force." A book written with such an object as this, he trusted, would commend itself at least to the Episcopal party. He had given strong proofs, he says, in Paris of his attachment to the English Church. Whilst he was suffering from a dangerous illness, his friend Mersenne had visited him, and had pressed him to receive the sacraments from his hands. The sick man, turning off the request by asking when Mersenne had last seen Gassendi, made it evident to him that he could not accede to his wishes; but as soon as Dr. Cosens called, gladly listened to the prayers of our Church, and received the communion. Nevertheless, he says, the divines, who surrounded Prince Charles, denounced him as an enemy of the Church, and procured his banishment from the court. The injustice, he considers, was the greater, because the time was one in which he might have published anything that he pleased in England against the doctrines of the Church, and yet he had always pleaded for them. His own country seemed a safer place to him now than France, where he was denounced both by Roman Catholics and Anglicans. When he came here he says he had great difficulties about the place in which he should worship, for he disliked the Puritans and their extempore prayers. But he at length found a quiet Episcopalian clergyman at some distance from his residence, with whom he could communicate. After the Restoration his doctrine was still, he affirms, condemned by ecclesiastics and academicians, approved by nobles and learned

His attachment to the English Church.

Denounced by Anglican divines.

Fate of the book.

laymen. "No one refuted it; those who endeavoured to refute, established it."

Book *De Corpore.*

40. The rest of the life of Hobbes was passed in the Cavendish family. The old man was anything but idle. First he wrote his book *De Corpore.* Therein, he says, he laid the foundations of Logic, Geometry, Physics—"deducing logic from the signification of names; geometry and physics from the generation of figures and of natural effects." How true this description is we shall discover afterwards. We quote it that our readers may see how thoroughly Hobbes understood himself. Some thinkers, not from want of honesty, but from their glimpses into mines which are unfathomable, necessarily suggest what they do not express. One disciple may see in them what another does not see; not only different consequences but different principles may be imputed to them. It ought not to be so with Hobbes. He tells you exactly what he thinks, and all that he thinks. Some passages in this autobiography might tempt us to adopt another conclusion. The theological reputation which attaches to him might make us suspect that he was imposing upon us when he professed so much sympathy with the ordinary belief and worship of his country. The opinions of many of his disciples, and the almost uniform language of his opponents, might strengthen that apprehension. Some doubt, too, might be thrown upon his political creed. If he was the stoutest of royalists, how comes it, we might ask, that he has generally had, and has now, more democrats than monarchists among those who reverence his name? Questions, no doubt, to ask and to be answered. They will be answered, we believe, by the fair consideration of his works, without our being driven to entertain the slightest doubt of his sincerity, the least notion that there was any background in his mind which he would keep out of our sight.

Hobbes not a dissembler.

Grounds of the suspicion that he kept something back.

His Ethics.

41. If there is great help for the study of his logical and physical writings in his account of the book *De Corpore*, much, though perhaps not quite as much, may be learnt from his summary of his moral doctrine. "He deduced the manners of men from human nature; virtues and vices from a natural law; and the goodness and wickedness of actions from the laws of states." Any young student proposing to write an essay upon Hobbes would do well to take this sentence as his text, and to illustrate each clause of it from his writings. Of course, it will behove him to take his definitions of human nature, of natural law, of the laws of states, from the author, and not from any extraneous source. If he adheres to that rule, he will at once do justice to his subject, and will perceive what there is in the mind of Hobbes which meets his own, what there is which he asks from

him, and asks in vain. One remark we ought to make, lest an unfair inference should be drawn from one of the phrases in this extract. Hobbes did not deduce the manners of men from human nature in *this* sense, that he preferred general and abstract reports, such as schoolmen could give, of human nature, to the actual observations of living men. At ninety years old he brought out his translation of the Iliad and the Odyssee. Dry and hard that translation may be; but it contains ample evidence of the admiration with which the writer regarded Homer, and of his willingness to take his reports of the manners of men rather than those of more professed and formal analysts. We shall not understand Hobbes, or the power which he has exerted, if this fact is overlooked. No doubt it was a principal cause of the evidently unfeigned respect with which Cowley regarded him. In the verses wherein that worthy poet celebrated him as the reformer of philosophy, the leading thought is, that he emancipated it from the yoke of the schools, and brought it into connection with the practice of life. Hobbes to Cowley was another Socrates. Our sage, as we have hinted, is very straightforward in his comments upon himself. He affirms that he was singularly just, and also benevolent. The remark is made with the same quietness as it would be made about any other man. The motives which induce some autobiographers to suppress such convictions, were wanting to him. Why should he affect to conceal what he was sure of? His conversation, he says, was pleasant, and for the most part indulgent and tolerant; though, sometimes, when persons came to argue with him about the principles of *The Leviathan*, or the book *De Cive*, he was unnecessarily vehement. We do not need his help in decyphering his countenance; nor has he flattered it. He reports it to have been "not beautiful, but when he was speaking, far from disagreeable." Little remains to be told of him after his own narrative ceases. His last illness was a painful but a short one. He died in 1679, in his ninety-first year.

Hobbes a Student of the concrete

Homer

His self commendations.

42. Before we enter upon the writings of Hobbes, we must notice one more very pregnant hint with which his autobiography furnishes us. He describes a certain moment of his life in which this question flashed upon him as the most important of all with which a philosopher could be occupied—What is it that causes anything to pass out of rest into motion? If we can discover the cause of movement, we have found the great secret of all. So thought the sage of Malmesbury; and we must never forget that he deemed this reflection as the critical one of his history—that to which different speculations might be referred, and by which they must be interpreted. His search, then, was for *Motive-power*. And this in one region as well as in another.

What account Hobbes gives of his own central thought.

Search for Motive-power.

In Physics, in Ethics, in Politics, even in Geometry, this is the object which he sets before himself. Let me know what causes people to act, and I will tell you what individuals are, what society is, how you may govern and control one being or another. Generally speaking, the student of Hobbes is most concerned with his human speculations, and assumes these to be the ground of all others in which he was engaged. But it may be that his physical speculations—with which he occupied himself so early at Oxford, and to which he returned at Paris—really determined the character of his other speculations. What will move a stone or a beast, was, for him, the first and simplest inquiry. Then would come, what force must be added to this in order to move a man? which would, of course, involve the further question, what has man besides a stone or a beast? What must the moralist or politician take account of in the creatures he has to deal with, which the quarry-man or coal-beaver, or the herdsman, need not take account of? How much might be *expected* to follow if this were the order of the student's thoughts we need not consider. There will be far more interest in observing what was the *actual* course in the mind of Hobbes himself. But we throw out this remark beforehand, because it connects him with the last great man of whom we spoke; because it shows that the influence of the one upon the other may have been more considerable than the younger of the two would perhaps have been willing to confess; and because it indicates the direction which all inquiries were taking in the seventeenth century. There has been a descent from the highest moral and spiritual region upon the physical region. Now comes the doubt, whether there is any ascent from that region to the other, or whether the physical may not comprehend all within itself. Hobbes was to investigate one side of this problem. He believed that he had solved it altogether; that the maxims which he laid down would suffice for the universe. Let us see what those maxims were before we pronounce whether he judged rightly or no.

Whence does he start in this inquiry?

Physical direction of men's thoughts in this century.

Elements of Philosophy—Works by Sir W. Molesworth. Vol. i.

43. In Sir William Molesworth's edition of Hobbes, the work on the *Elements of Philosophy* stands first. It is a translation made under the eye of the writer, from a treatise he wrote in Latin. It is entitled, therefore, to more respect than any version we could offer of his words. It is introduced by an Epistle Dedicatory to the Earl of Devonshire. That epistle is worthy to be perused if the reader would know what Hobbes thought of his predecessors, his contemporaries, and himself. He says that "that part of philosophy wherein are considered lines and figures, has been delivered to us notably improved by the ancients; and withal a most perfect pattern of the logic by which they were enabled to find out and demonstrate such excellent theorems as

The Ancients led the way in Geometry and Logic.

they have done." He attributes the discovery of the diurnal motion of the earth also to the Ancients. Nevertheless, he regards Galileo as the real beginner of an age of Natural Philosophy. He pays due honour to Kepler, Gassendi, and Mersenne, and looks upon Harvey as the real founder of the science of the human body. "Natural Philosophy is therefore but young; but Civil Philosophy yet much younger, as being no older (I say it provoked, and that my detractors may know how little they have wrought upon me) than my own book *De Cive*." He proceeds to answer the question, whether there were no philosophers among the Greeks, by remarking, "There walked in old Greece a certain phantasm for superficial gravity, though full within of fraud and filth, a little like philosophy, which unwary men, thinking to be it, adhered to the professors of it, some to one, some to another, though they disagreed among themselves, and with great salary put their children to them to be taught, instead of wisdom, nothing but to dispute, and neglecting the laws to determine every question according to their own fancies." Hobbes is of course entitled to his own opinion about Greek philosophy, though it may be even further from the judgment of the eminent historian of Greece to whom Sir William Molesworth dedicated the collected edition of his works, than from that which has been expressed in this treatise; the Philosopher of Malmesbury attributing to all the teachers of that land the character usually given to the Sophists; Mr. Grote affirming even the Sophists to be undeserving of that character. But though we may easily admit the more extended knowledge of disciples to correct the opinions of a master, we cannot overlook the effect which these opinions produced on the mind of the master himself. We must take his words as deliberate—he never uttered any that were not deliberate—that the *De Cive* is the beginning of civil philosophy. All forms and fancies past are to be blotted out of the book of the world's memory; *that* is henceforth to be the starting-point of any conclusion respecting the condition of man as a social being. Hobbes no doubt admits, with becoming piety, that the Scriptures retain their authority. He appeals, in this very dedication, to St. Paul's denunciation of philosophy, falsely so called. He protests against the school divinity in phrases that would sound particularly orthodox in the ears of a number of modern Protestant divines. He only desires that religion should take its own way, and should not trouble philosophy or be troubled by it. We are naturally impatient to arrive at that book which is, in some sort, to be the beginning of all books, to supersede whatever has gone before it —and do not like to linger in the consideration of subjects about which other men are allowed to have had some inkling of know-

With whom Civil Knowledge began

The Greek sages according to Hobbes and to Mr. Grote.

Dedication. P. x.

ledge. Still we are bound to ascertain from the treatise which is before us what Hobbes thought of philosophy, and what was his method of treating it.

Definition of Philosophy.

Ratiocination.

The process of Addition.

The process of Substraction.

Effects deduced from their Generation.

Generations deduced from Effects.

44. "Philosophy is such knowledge of effects or appearances as we acquire by true ratiocination from the knowledge we have first of their causes or generation; and again, of such causes or generations as may be from first knowing their effects." Definitions in Hobbes are all-important—to understand them is to understand him. We must therefore look into the different parts of this sentence. The emphatic word in it is not *Knowledge* but *Ratiocination.* The sense and memory of things which belong to man in common with other animals are knowledge; but they are not arrived at by ratiocination, therefore they do not involve philosophy. What, then, is this ratiocination? It is the same thing as *computation.* "It is comprehended in the two operations of the mind—addition and substraction." These processes are illustrated thus: Suppose me to see something at a distance; I have an idea of that which, after it has got a name, is called *body.* I see this thing moving from one place to another; I have the idea of that which, when it has got a name, is called *animated.* Presently, as I come nearer, this thing speaks in a way which is intelligible to me; I have the idea of that which, when it has got a name, is called *rational.* I add together these three ideas, body, animated, rational, and the result is the idea of that which, when it has got a name, is called *Man.* Here is one process. Next, I see a man standing before me; I have this compound idea present to me. Gradually I lose sight of those things which were signs of his being rational; so nothing remains but the idea of animated body. I lose sight of the signs of animation; the idea of body only is left. At last that disappears. This is the process of mental substraction. Now, "the effects and appearances of things to sense are faculties or powers of bodies, which make us distinguish them one from another." How to obtain a knowledge of these from a knowledge of their generation, may be learnt from the example of a circle. Suppose a plain figure before me, having, as near as may be, the figure of a circle. I cannot tell whether it is a true circle or no; but "let it be known that the figure was made by the circumduction of a body, whereof one end remained unmoved, and we may reason thus: A body carried about, retaining always the same length, applies itself first to one radius, then to another, to a third, a fourth, and successively to all; and therefore the same length from the same point toucheth the circumference in every part thereof, which is as much as to say, all the radii are equal. We know, therefore, that from such generation proceeds a figure from whose one middle point all the extreme

points are reached unto by equal radii. And, in like manner, by knowing first what figure is set before us, we may come, by ratiocination, to some generation of the same; though perhaps not that by which it was made, yet that by which it might have been made. He who knows that a circle has the property above deduced, will easily know whether a body carried about as is said will generate a circle or no."

Knowledge is Power.

45. Nothing is more characteristic of Hobbes than his view of the end or scope of Philosophy. A popular writer of our day has rightly disputed the ordinary application of the words "knowledge is power," when those words are attributed to Bacon. In that ordinary acceptation they belong strictly to Hobbes. "The end of knowledge," he says, "is power, and the use of theorems, which among geometricians serve for the finding out of properties, is for the construction of problems; and lastly, the scope of all speculation is the performance of some action or thing to be done." That there is a *tendency* to this conclusion in Bacon, that it is a peculiarly English tendency, that it was stronger in the England of the seventeenth century than of any previous century, we have had proofs already. But no one fixes it so dogmatically and exclusively as the Doctor of Malmesbury. No one so thoroughly banishes the idea of knowledge having any worth for its own sake, of its being good to perceive truth without reference to that which truth will accomplish. We may measure the advantages of *Natural* Philosophy and Geometry, by the unhappiness of those nations that want the different arts of life which this knowledge has procured for us. *Moral and Civil* Philosophy ought in like manner to avert civil calamities, such especially as civil war. It has failed to do this. Ethical, political, theological speculations have done nothing for men answering to that which has been done in the other region. For there is "wanting in them a true and certain rule of our actions, by which we might know whether that we undertake be just or unjust. For it is to no purpose to be bidden in everything to do right, before there be a certain rule and measure of right established; which no man hitherto hath established." Now we begin to see what the book *De Cive* has done, which previously had been left utterly undone!

Part I. 1, § 6.

Elements of Philosophy. *Ubi sup.*

P. 9.

What Philosophy includes and excludes.

46. Hobbes, as we have seen, has a great respect for Divinity in its own place; but it stands wholly apart from Philosophy in any of its aspects. "The subject of Philosophy . . is . . . every body of whose generation or properties we can have any knowledge. . . . . Therefore it excludes Theology, I mean the doctrine of God, eternal, ingenerable, incomprehensible, and in whom there is nothing to divide or compound, nor any generation to be conceived. It excludes the doctrine of Angels and all

such things as are thought to be neither bodies nor properties of bodies. It excludes History, as well natural as political, though most useful, nay, necessary to Philosophy, because such knowledge is but experience or authority, and not ratiocination. . . . It excludes Astrology and Magic. . . . It excludes all such knowledge as is acquired by Divine inspiration or revelation, as not derived to us by reason, but by Divine grace, in an instant and as it were by some sense supernatural. It excludes the doctrine of God's worship as being not to be known by natural reason, but by the authority of the Church, and as being the object of faith and not of knowledge." Then we come to the divisions of Philosophy. As it has reference to bodies, this division must be determined by the kinds of bodies. These are two. "One is called a natural body, being the work of nature, the other is called a commonwealth, and is made by the wills and agreement of man. The two parts of Philosophy are therefore natural and civil." Civil is again divided into *Ethics*, or that part "which treats of men's dispositions and manners," and *Politics*, or "that which takes cognizance of their civil duties." Hobbes proposes in his treatise to discourse on these three topics.

Pp. 10, 11.

P. 12.

Computation.

47. The Prolegomena of Hobbes, besides this general statement of the objects of Philosophy, include a chapter on Names, on Propositions, on Syllogisms, on Erring and Falsity, and on Method. All these fall under the general head of *Computation.* What cannot be *computed* has nothing to do with Philosophy in his sense of the word. And he is quite sure that it ought not to have anything to do with Philosophy in any sense of the word. There may be a region which is not natural, ethical, or political, but whatever is comprehended under these names must obey the laws, and submit to the limitations which Hobbes has established. Let no one suppose that such decided language, such a calm assumption of authority, will diminish the number of his disciples; that they will quote the writer's appeals to reason against himself. The craving for certainty in the heart of man is a profound craving. It does not cease in the least degree because the name of Philosophy is exchanged for the name of faith. It is strongest in the young, strongest in those who are most eager to turn thought into action. Irrefragable conclusions are delightful; a pope or dictator to make us secure that they are irrefragable is more delightful still. Writers with a thousandth part of Hobbes's clearness,—with a small modicum of his marvellous faculty for definition,—have been followed precisely because they were as sure as he was, not only that what they affirmed was right, but that nothing could be right except what they affirmed. There were many classes in the days of Hobbes to whom such a relief from the vagueness of suspense

The great charm of Hobbes.

The Dictator

The weakness of the age of Charles II

and doubt must have been infinitely acceptable; many to whom it will have been far more agreeable because it came clothed in the form of ratiocination, not of prescription; because it gratified their dislike of schoolmen, while it offered a more complete escape from scepticism than schoolmen had offered. We may consider hereafter how this doctrine of the *De Cive* and the *Leviathan* must have harmonized with some of the ethical and metaphysical tendencies of the day, and what was the cause of the resistance which it nevertheless provoked from those who were affected by these tendencies. The treatise we have been speaking of rather obliges us to inquire how far the doctrines of it were likely to please those philosophers who had been learning from Bacon to reverence physical studies, and who hoped to find in his experimental method an ever fresh light in pursuing them.

Hobbes how far to be claimed by the physical investigators.

Danger of relapsing into the worship of Logic.

Not compensated by his restraints upon spiritual invasions.

48. No one paid greater honour to these studies than Hobbes. They had been helpful to mankind, while ethical and moral pursuits had been barren. Strictly speaking, all other studies begin from these. Philosophy has to do with bodies and their movements. The ethical and political teacher must prove that there are special bodies, with special motions, of which he alone is competent to treat. Might not a reader of the *Novum Organum* exclaim, "Yes: Now at last proper homage will be rendered to the pure science; those who have presumed to lord it over us must bend their sheaves to ours?" But such first thoughts will soon have given place to others. "Is not the honour a perilous one? Will it not involve a fall from some of the steps which we have so hardly won? Did not our fathers worship *Ratiocination?* Did not that worship hinder us from examining living forces; from tracking Nature into her hiding places? It may be convenient to draw the line so strictly about Philosophy that Divines and Astrologers may be kept at a safe and respectful distance. But may not the cordon which restrains the invader from without restrain also the student within? May he not sometimes be forced to push his own investigations into the forbidden region?" Even Hobbes himself had given hints which could not be acted upon without some hazard to his precautionary maxims. Motion he regarded with a strange wonder; thence all thought appeared for him to begin. Might not the movements of bodies suggest strange dynamical speculations? Might not these pass into dreams about a spiritual world? And though an orthodox sage, such as he of Malmesbury was, would at once set up a sign-post to admonish the trespasser that that ground had been assigned to the theologian, and must not be approached, such warnings had been defaced and disregarded in former days. Was a time par-

ticularly lively with the ambition and hope of physical conquest certain to respect them more? Hobbes, with his powers of ratiocination and computation, could not fairly count upon *these* allies. We will now pass to our own subject.

The Treatise *De Cive* is found p. 183 of the 2d vol. of the *Opera Latina*, in Sir W. Molesworth's edition; the Translation occupies the whole of the 2d vol. of the English Works.

Quantâ autem voluptate afficieris, quando videris nobilem illam Philosophiam non minus quam Euclidis Elementa demonstrari.

C. 1, p. 5. The Latin is simpler—"Hoc est, sui non sociorum amore contrahitur. sect. 3, p. 161. English Works, vol. ii., p. 6.

Men's fear of each other. § 3. English Works.

Desire to injure, § 4.

Competition, § 5.

Natural right, § 7.

Means of enforcing it, § 8.

§ 10.

War and Peace.

49. The Treatise *De Cive* is properly a section of the *Elements of Philosophy*. But its author regarded it as a substantive work; in the highest sense as his own work. The original Latin and the Translation are of equal authority;—one may sometimes serve for the correction and interpretation of the other. The Latin must not be overlooked by the student, for it is introduced by panegyrics from two eminent men—Gassendi and Mersenne. The Brother of the Order of Friars Minimi, pronounces the Philosophy of Hobbes to be noble, and to be as completely demonstrated as the *Elements of Euclid.* With this high theological imprimâtur we may proceed to examine the contents of the book. It is divided into three parts, headed respectively,—Liberty; Dominion; Religion. The first part opens with a discussion, "On the State of Men without Civil Society." The notion of the Greek philosophers, that man is a political being, is at once dismissed as a foolish fiction. "All Society is either for gain or for glory; that is, not so much for love of our fellows, as for the love of ourselves." "The original of all great and lasting societies consisted not in the mutual good-will men had to each other, but in the mutual fear they had of each other." Whence does this fear arise? *First,* from the natural equality of men: every man has power to hurt his neighbour; power even to kill him. The weakest person may kill one who is far stronger than himself. And, *Secondly,* every one *wishes* to hurt his neighbour—the strong because he feels that he is able to do it, the weak because he wants to protect himself against the strong. Add to this the rivalship of wits in men, and the appetite in a number of men for the same objects, and you cannot stop short of the conclusion that the natural state of man is a state of WAR, and that Society is an effort to escape from this war. But what can suggest the escape? Every one desires to defend his life and limbs as well as he can. This is the foundation of natural right. In this right is involved the right of using all means whereby life and limbs may be defended. Of this end and of these means I am myself the judge. That is the meaning of the phrase, that nature has given to each person a right over all things. By nature I have a right to get all I can, and therefore to deprive all other people of all I can. But since this right belongs to all men equally, it is clearly a useless one; the war of man against man is endless. It is therefore the dictate of right reason that each man shall seek allies and helpers to keep down his neigh-

bours in this war, and if possible to hinder them from making war upon him. The natural state is war, yet Nature bids us seek for peace.

50. Thus we arrive at the sense of a Law of Nature, which is as unlike as possible to the Right of Nature we have been considering—rather is the antagonist of it. "*The Law of Nature is the dictate of right Reason, conversant about those things which are either to be done or omitted for the constant preservation of life and members as much as in us lies.*" Starting from this general definition, we can discover the particular laws which compose the Natural Code. The first and fundamental precept may be stated at once. *Peace is to be sought after where it may be found, and where not, to provide ourselves helps for war.* The second, which prescribes *the performance of Contracts,* can only be understood when we know what a *Contract* is. All in a state of nature having an equal right to all things, each having a power to hurt the other, the contract is the resignation of this right or this power by one man, in consideration of a similar resignation by another. Contracts in the simplest sense are performed at once; the exchange is made, and is at an end. *Contracts* pointing to the future, and involving trust, are called *Covenants* or *Pacts.* Covenants are impossible except each party to it can declare his acceptance of it. There can, therefore, be no consent between a man and a beast. "Neither can any man covenant with God, or be obliged to Him by vow, except so far as it appears to him by Holy Scriptures that He hath substituted certain men who have authority to accept of such vows and covenants, as being in God's stead." These Covenants, then, mark the transition from a State of War to a State of Peace—from the State of Nature to Civil Society. It is the function of Civil Society to enforce them. In doing so it enforces a law of Nature or of Reason. Injury or wrong is the violation of a covenant. No injury can be done to any man with whom there is no agreement. A just act is that which is done in virtue of an agreement; an unjust act, one that is done in contravention of an agreement. A just man may be called one who does just acts in obedience to the Law—unjust only from infirmity; an unjust man, one who does just acts from dread of the punishment affixed to the law—unjust acts from the iniquity of his mind. This definition, which some might not have expected from Hobbes, must be borne in mind, as it affects rather curiously his controversy with several of his opponents.

Cap. 2.
The Law of Nature.

The primary maxim, p. 16. § 2.

Meaning of a Contract and Covenant, pp. 18, 20, § (5-9.)

P. 22, § 12.

Observation of Contract, the second precept of Natural Law, c. 3, pp. 29-35. Est similitudo quædam inter id quod in vitâ communi vocatur *Injuria* & Id quod in scholis solet appellari *absurdum.* Laten, § 3.

51. The third precept of Natural Law is, *That you suffer not him to be the worse for you who, out of the confidence he had in you, has done you a good turn;* or *that you accept not a gift, but with a mind to endeavour that the giver shall have no occa-*

Third Precept—Ingratitude, c. 3 § 8 p. 56.

Fourth Precept.

Fifth Precept—Forgiveness.

Sixth Precept—Against Cruelty.

Seventh Precept—Contumely.

Eighth Precept—Pride.

Ninth Precept—Meekness.

Tenth Precept—Equity.

Eleventh Precept—Concerning things to be had in common.

Twentieth Precept—Law, § 25, p. 44.

sion to repent of his gift. In other words, the Natural Law prohibits *ingratitude,* which, like an injury, threatens a return to the state of war. The next precept is, that *every man render himself useful unto others.* This is grounded on the same reason. A man who appropriates to himself more than he wants, and so becomes inconvenient or disagreeable to his neighbour, provokes retaliation, *i. e.*, war. The fifth precept is, *That we must forgive him who seeks pardon for what is past, having first taken caution for the time to come.* Peace being the great object, unforgiveness deprives us of one security for peace. The sixth follows upon this. *In punishment we are to consider not the past evil, but the future good.* The violation of this rule is commonly called *cruelty.* The next prohibits *contumely.* All signs of hatred and contempt tend to fighting; therefore we are not to insult our neighbour by deeds, words, or looks. The next precept is against *pride.* It is necessary for the preservation of peace that men should be held as equal: assumption of superiority tends to the disturbance of peace. The next precept prescribes *moderation.* As it was necessary for the preservation of each man's life and limbs that he should part with some of his rights, so it is necessary for the same end that he should retain some. But what one man retains, another man must also retain; the meek man concedes that to others which he asks for himself. The next is a corollary from this: it prohibits what is called in Scripture "the accepting of persons," *i. e.*, the allowing one man to have more rights or privileges than you assign to another. The eleventh precept is, that what things cannot be divided should be used in common; or, if that is not possible, in proportion to the number of people who are using them. All the laws which follow (there are twenty) refer consistently to this same notion of violating peace. The last concerns drunkenness: it rests upon the ground that inebriety weakens ratiocination, and ratiocination is the ground of that law which secures peace.

How to ascertain what is against the Law of Nature or not.

52. But how are these natural laws to be maintained? No doubt, hope, fear, anger, ambition, avarice, vain-glory, and other disturbances of mind, do interfere with the observation of them. Every one is sometimes in a reasonable state of mind; and he who will put himself in another man's place, and think how such and such an act would then appear, will always be able to discover what is according to nature, and what is contrary to it. Doing to another as you would that he should do to you, is therefore a very useful and generally applicable rule. It must not, however, be concluded that every one is bound to observe all these natural laws, when other people are refusing to observe them. This would be irrational, and might result in the hindrance of peace, instead of the promotion of it. Natural laws are

always to be observed in the internal court of conscience; they are to come forth into the outer court when it is safe that they should. These laws of nature are immutable and eternal. What they forbid cannot be lawful. Actions may be diversified by circumstances and the law of the land; but the great object of securing peace and protection is never changeable; and the virtues of the mind, so far as they belong to it, are also unchangeable. The observation of these laws, which requires only a steady effort of mind, constitutes the just or righteous man. This natural law is the same with the moral law. In order to avoid a state of war, we need some standard of good and evil. Different men give different meanings to the words, according to their different appetites, temperaments, opinions. All, however, who are in a state of war agree that that is evil; all hold peace to be good. Whatever, then, is ascertained by reason to be conducive to peace is good. This is the only standard. Every philosophical attempt to found morality upon some other ground is futile. In the fourth chapter of this first book Hobbes shows that his natural law is also the divine law—1*st,* Because reason, which is itself the law of nature, is imparted immediately by God to every one for the rule of his actions; 2*d,* Because the precepts of life, which are thence derived, are the same that were promulgated by the Divine Majesty as laws of the kingdom of heaven by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the holy prophets and apostles. This point is established by a series of quotations from the Old and New Testaments, confirming each of the twenty laws that Hobbes has laid down. We need hardly say that he finds no difficulty in proving from the same source his proposition, that these laws belong to the inner man. That the law of nature is easy to be observed he deduces from the words—" My yoke is easy and my burden is light." And as all the law of nature is divine, so he affirms that the law of Christ, as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount, with the exception of the one passage respecting divorce, which belongs to positive law, is the law of nature. He does not extend the observation to the whole Christian doctrine; part of it belongs to faith, which is altogether different from law. Laws concern actions which follow our will; faith and opinions, which are out of our power, do not follow our will.

The Laws of Nature immutable.

Natural law identical with Moral, § 31, p. 47.

And with the Divine.

Scriptural evidence.

The Sermon on the Mount.

Law and faith, p. 62, § 24.

53. We have now finished the book on *Liberty;* we come to *Dominion.* The first chapter is on the causes of the generation of Civil Government. The *state* of nature, we have found, is the state of war; the *laws* of nature point to the preservation of peace. Evidently, then, the existence of these laws does not involve obedience to them : how is this to be obtained? The instances of societies among animals, such as bees and ants, do not help

Government. Book II.

us. There are conflicts of honours and dignities among men, which are not found among animals. There is no difference in a society of ants and bees between the common good and the individual good. As they are without reason, they do not discover faults in their commonwealths, or wish to change the form of them. Nor is there among them that mighty power of words which enabled an orator like Pericles to throw all Greece into confusion. Nor do they distinguish injury from loss. Lastly, the agreement of these brute-creatures is natural; that of men artificial. More, then, is required in a society of men than in a society of such animals; what is *that* more? The conspiracy of many wills will not do; there must be one will for all. But "this cannot be done unless every man will so subject his will to some other one—to wit, either man or council—that whatsoever his will is in those things which are necessary to the common peace, it be received for the will of all men in general, and every one in particular." Submission of the will of all to the will of a man, or to the will of a majority of a council, is called *Union*. It involves a conveyance to the ruler of each man's strength and faculties. "Then he to whom they have submitted will have so much power as by the tenor of it he can enforce the wills of particular men into unity and concord." The Union is called a City, or Civil Society. It must be accounted one *person*. Every State is a civil person, though there may be civil persons that are not States. Every guild and corporation of merchants is for certain purposes a civil person; but it is subordinate to the State, wherein all particular or individual interests are merged in the one will.

Difference between a community of bees and one of men.

Condition of a civil society. chap. 5.

54. This Union has been formed by the consent of a majority of wills; those who dissent must submit, or be treated as enemies. The multitude has ceased to exist. It is merged in the One Person. But there is this limitation: Men unite for the sake of security against each other. A civil society which does not afford this security fails of its end. Then men resume the right of defending themselves. Clearly a State cannot provide for the security of its subjects by bargains or agreements; it must provide for that security by punishments. Each man must be made to understand that it is more his interest not to do a wrong to another than to do it. The right of punishing is committed to any one, when each person in a society agrees not to assist him who is punished. Whosoever has the right of using the sword of justice against any man in a society is necessarily understood to have the supreme power in that society. This sword of justice against the individuals constituting a society would be useless, if there were not given to the same person the sword of war, against those lying outside of the

The protection necessary to this Union, cap. 6.

The Sword of Justice.

society who may invade or disturb it. That is to say, the members of the society must be ready to enforce his decrees against the outward invader as much as against the internal rebel. From this supreme power holding these two swords, the rules and measures which determine what is mine or thine, what is just and unjust, what is useful and useless, what is good and evil, what is honest and dishonest, must proceed. These rules and measures, which are commonly called civil laws, or laws of the State, are simply the mandates of him who has the supreme power in the State. In this supreme power must vest the selection of subordinate ministers and magistrates.

The Sword of War.

§ 11, p. 78.

Acts depend on opinions.

How they affect the city.

Curiously inverted in Sir W. Molesworth's reading of the Latin text, *vel majorem pœnam manere sibi neganti quam præstanti obsequium.* The *majorem* is probably right; the participles have changed places.

Conflicting dread of the present and of the future.

Note to § 11, p. 79.

55. The next position is too important not to have a separate place assigned it, or to be given in any words except those of the author. "It is also manifest that all voluntary actions have their beginning from, and necessarily depend on the will; and that the will of doing or omitting aught depends on the opinion of the good and evil, of the reward or punishment which a man conceives he shall receive by the act or omission: so as the actions of all men are ruled by the opinions of each. Wherefore, by evident and necessary inference, we may understand that it very much concerns the interests of peace, that no opinions or doctrines be delivered to citizens by which they may imagine that either by right they may not obey the laws of the city, that is, the commands of that man or council to whom the supreme power is committed, or that it is lawful to resist him, or that a less punishment remains for him that denies, than for him that yields obedience. For if one command somewhat to be done under penalty of natural death, another forbid it under pain of eternal death, and both by their own right, it will follow that the citizens, although innocent, are not only by right punishable, but that the city itself is altogether dissolved. For no man can serve two masters; nor is he less, but more, a master whom we believe we are to obey for fear of damnation, than he whom we obey for fear of temporal death. It follows, therefore, that this one, whether man or court, to whom the city hath committed the supreme power, have also this right; that he both judges what opinions and doctrines are enemies unto peace, and also that he forbid them to be taught." To this memorable passage a note is subjoined, not less memorable:—"There is scarce any principle, neither in the worship of God nor in human sciences, from whence there may not spring dissensions, discords, reproaches, and, by degrees, war itself. Neither doth this happen by reason of the falsehood of the principle, but of the disposition of men, who, seeming wise to themselves, will needs appear such to all others. But though such dissensions cannot be hindered from arising, yet may they be restrained by

the exercise of the supreme power, that they prove no hindrance to the public peace. Of these kinds of opinions, therefore, I have not spoken in this place. There are certain doctrines wherewith subjects being tainted, they verily believe that obedience may be refused to the city, and that by right they may, nay ought, to oppose and fight against chief princes and dignities. Such are those which, whether directly and openly, or more obscurely and by consequence, require obedience to be given to others besides them to whom the supreme authority is committed. I deny not but this reflects on the power which many, living under other government, ascribe to the chief head of the Church of Rome, and also on that which elsewhere, out of that Church, bishops require in their's to be given to them; and, last of all, on that liberty which the lower sort of citizens, under pretence of religion, do challenge to themselves. For what civil war was there ever in the Christian world which did not either grow from, or was nourished by this root? The judgment, therefore, of doctrines, whether they be repugnant to civil obedience or not, and if they be repugnant, the power of prohibiting them to be taught, I do here attribute to the civil authority. For, since there is no man who grants not to the city the judgment of those things which belong to its peace and defence, and it is manifest that the opinions which I have already recited do relate to its peace; it follows necessarily that the examination of those opinions, whether they be such or not, must be referred to the city; that is, to him who hath the supreme authority."

Romanism, Anglicanism, Puritanism.

Reasons why the Civil Power shall control such opinions.

C. vi., § 13. Absolute power must vest in the ruler of a city, p. 80-83.

56. The next proposition apparently strengthens, perhaps really modifies, that which has preceded it. The dominion which is vested in the ruler of a State is absolute dominion. That title must not be limited or explained away under any pretext. It signifies not whether the government is a Monarchy or a Democracy; so far as it is a government at all, it is absolute. Where, then, is the restraint? "It is one thing if I say, *I give you right to command what you will;* another if I say, *I will do whatsoever you command.* And the command may be such as I would rather die than do it." While, therefore, Hobbes affirms that in no case is the right taken from the ruler of slaying those who shall refuse to obey him, he adds—and let the words be remembered to his honour —"But they who thus kill men, although by right given them from him that hath it, yet, if they use that right otherwise than right reason requires, they sin against the laws of nature—that is, against God." He rejects utterly the notion that the ruler of the city is bound to the civil laws,—that would imply an obligation to himself; or that he is bound to any of his citizens,

The ruler not bound by the laws of the city, p. 83, § 14.

seeing that he contains the wills of all particular citizens. It is a necessary consequence from these premises that property is a creature of society, and that no man can assert a property in anything as against the supreme ruler. It follows, also, that though theft, murder, adultery, and all injuries, are forbidden by the law of nature, yet that "what theft, what murder, what adultery, and, in general, what injury is, that must be known by the civil laws—that is, the commands of him who hath the supreme authority."

Property, § 15, p. 84.

P. 87, and see the whole of § 16.

Hobbes, Locke, St. Paul.

57. Many questions arise in this chapter which are of great importance in considering the compatibility or incompatibility of Hobbes's doctrine with that one which is set forth in Locke's *Treatise on Government.* Other more interesting questions still suggest the relation or opposition between the philosopher of Malmesbury and St. Paul, in his parable of the head and members. Both these subjects will come before us hereafter; the latter belongs more strictly to the *Leviathan* than to the work which we are now considering. In the following chapter Hobbes appears as the antagonist of Aristotle. He accepts the division of governments into democracy, aristocracy, monarchy, as the only possible division. He utterly rejects the supposed counterfeits or corruptions of these, anarchy, oligarchy, tyranny. These, according to him, are distinctions without a difference. Any one who dislikes a democracy may call it an anarchy, an aristocracy an oligarchy, a monarchy a tyranny. "These names," he says, "betoken not a diverse kind of government, but the diverse opinions of the subjects concerning him who hath the supreme power." Next, he utterly rejects the notion of a State compounded of these different forms. He explains very distinctly what he means. "For example, if the naming of magistrates and the arbitration of war and peace should belong to the King, judicature to the Lords, and contribution of monies to the People, and the power of making laws to all together, this kind of State would they call a mixed monarchy forsooth. But if it were possible that there could be such a State, it would no whit advantage the liberty of the subject. For as long as they all agree, each citizen is as much subject as possibly he can be: but if they disagree, the State returns to a civil war and the right of the private sword; which certainly is much worse than any subjection whatsoever. But that there can be no such kind of government hath been sufficiently demonstrated in the foregoing chapter."

Hobbes and Aristotle, cap. 7.

The supposed corruptions of the forms of Government, p. 94.

The notion of a mixture of forms, § 4 pp. 95, 96.

Democracy the starting-point.

58. It will be observed that Hobbes starts from democracy. "Those," he says, "who met together with intention to erect a city were almost in the very act of meeting, a democracy." Almost, but not quite. For, "the *people* is not in being before the constitution

Pp. 98 and 99.

Origin of an Aristocracy, § 8, p. 99.

Origin of Monarchy, § 11, p. 106.

Possible transgressions of rulers. § 14, p. 102.

The possible conditions of Monarchy.

P. 103.

Succession to any Monarchy.

P. 106, § 17.

of government, as not being any person, but a multitude of single persons; wherefore there could then no contract pass between the people and the subject." . . . . "Because, therefore, such kind of compacts must be understood to pass as necessary to the making up of a city, but none can be made between the subject and the people; it follows that they must be made between single citizens; viz., that each man contract to submit his will to the will of the major part, on condition that the rest do the like. As if every one should say thus: I give up my right unto the people for your sake, on condition that you also deliver up yours for mine." "An aristocracy or council of nobles receives its original from a democracy, which gives up its right unto it. . . . . Which being done, it is clear that the people, considered as one person, its supreme authority being already transferred on these, is no longer now in being." As with aristocracy, so with monarchy. "It is derived from the power of the people transferring its right, that is, its authority, on one man. . . . Which being done, the people is no longer one person, as being only one before by virtue of the supreme command, whereof they have now made a conveyance from themselves on this one man." Those who have received this power are not obliged by any compacts to any man. The supreme power, therefore, can do no injury to its subjects. Injury is only predicable of subjects who disobey that which they have compacted with each other to obey. Acts, however, may be done by rulers against the laws of nature. Each man who, by his vote, helps to decree such acts, is a sinner. "For sin is a consequence of the natural express will, not of the political, which is artificial." We need scarcely call the attention of our readers to this important sentence, or to this. "In a monarchy, if a monarch make any decrees against the laws of nature, he sins himself, because in him the civil will and the natural are all one." Monarchs may receive the supremacy from the people without limitation of time, or for a determinate time. If they have given him the power without limitation, he may appoint his successor. If they have not fixed a certain time when they will meet together as a people, to choose his successor, they as a people are dead, and the power must vest in him; and by the law of nature, which forbids him to return evil for good, he ought to exercise it. If they have reserved a dominion to themselves, he is merely their functionary. If they cannot meet again without his summons, his authority is absolute; and no covenants which he has made with the people to call them together can bind him, seeing that the people has *ipso facto* ceased to be. In fact, "if the monarch promise aught to any one, or many subjects together, by consequence whereof the exercise of his power may suffer prejudice, that promise or compact, whether made by oath or without it, is null." There are three ways in which subjects are released from their bonds of obedience,—1*st,* "By rejection, *viz.*, if a man cast off or forsake, but convey not the right of his command on some other. 2*d,* "If the kingdom fall into the power of an enemy." 3*d,* "In a monarchy, if there be no successor." There is a fourth case of a subject changing his soil either by permission or by banishment.

How obedience ceases, p. 106 § 18.

59. The two next chapters introduce a profoundly important subject—the rights of lords over their servants, the rights of parents over their children. All obligation being founded on contract, there must be a contract in the case of the captive taken in war who becomes the servant of another. Supposing he is held in bonds, there is no contract—he has the natural privilege of recovering his freedom by any means; supposing he is not held in bonds, the contract is the agreement of the lord not to kill or bind his captive, for the sake of his service; of the captive not to run away or injure his master, for the sake of his own life and of the portion of liberty which is left to him. This tie being once established, the lord has an absolute dominion over his servant. Whatsoever he had before his servitude becomes his lord's, whatsoever he gets is gotten for his lord. The lord may sell, pledge, or will away his servant; the lord cannot injure the servant. If he becomes the servant of another, his servants become the servants of that other. Having stated the different modes by which this contract may be dissolved, Hobbes proceeds to say that we get a right over irrational creatures in the same manner as we do over the persons of men, to wit, by force and natural strength. Our dominion over the beasts has its original from the right of nature; not, as some have fancied, from a Divine positive law. Otherwise man's condition would be very hard; for the beasts have certainly a right of nature to kill him.

Masters and Servants, chapter 8.

The Slave, according to Hobbes, is the man in bonds; the Servant the man who is trusted to go at large and do work, p. 110.

Right over beasts.

P. 114.

60. In treating of fatherly government Hobbes is too consistent a logician to forget the principles upon which he has been proceeding hitherto. There is no necessary connection between generation and government. We must go back to the state of nature, and the primary principle that the conqueror is lord of the conquered. By nature the dominion of the infant is in the mother, since she may either breed it up or leave it to fortune. Since the state of nature is the state of war, she brings it up on this condition, that being grown to full age he become not her enemy, which is that he obey her. The notion that the father, by reason of the pre-eminence of sex, and not the mother, is lord, signifies nothing. In the state of nature it cannot be known who is the father, but by the testimony of the mother. The child, therefore, is his whose the mother will have it be, and

Parent and Child, c. ix.

P. 115.

The Infant belongs by nature to the Mother.

How the Father's authority may arise, § 5, p. 118.

§ 7, p. 119.

consequently hers. This dominion may pass from the mother in different ways. If she exposes her child, he who brings it up has the same dominion over it which she had. Next, if the mother is taken prisoner, her child follows her state. Next, if she be a subject under any government, he that is supreme in that government will have the dominion over that which is born of her. The fourth case is that of marriage. "If a woman, for society's sake, gives herself to a man on this condition, that he shall bear the sway, he that receives his being from the contribution of both parties is the father's, in regard of the command he hath over the mother. But if a woman bearing rule shall have children by a subject, the children are the mother's; for, otherwise, the woman can have no children without prejudice to her authority." Thus it will be perceived that what is called the family principle is thoroughly brought under the general maxim of dominion. "The mother being the original lord of her children, and from her the father, or somebody else, by derived right, it is manifest that the children are no less subject to those by whom they are nourished and brought up than servants to their lords, and a subject to him who bears the supreme rule."

Sonship and Servitude, Liberty and Slavery.

P. 120, § 9.

Liberty defined *ubi sup.*

61. Hobbes, who never shrinks from a difficulty, perceives at once that the question must arise, "What, then, is the difference between a son, or between a subject and a servant?" He perceives further, that in this question is involved another—what liberty is and what slavery is? He indignantly, like a wise man, repudiates the notion that liberty is "to do all things according to our own fancies, and that without punishment." *Such* liberty, he says, is incompatible with civil government, and with the peace of mankind. He defines liberty as "nothing else but an absence of the lets and hindrances of motion." . . . "The more ways a man may move himself, the more liberty he hath. And herein consists civil liberty; for no man, whether subject, son, or servant, is so hindered by the punishments appointed by the city, the father, or the lord, how cruel soever, but that he may do all things and make use of all means necessary to the preservation of his life and health. For my part, therefore, I cannot find what reason a mere servant hath to make complaints, if they relate only to want of liberty; unless he count it a misery to be restrained from hurting himself, and to receive that life which by war or misfortune, or through his own idleness, was forfeited, together with all manner of sustenance, and all things necessary to the conservation of health, on this condition only, that he will be ruled. For he that is kept in by punishments laid before him, so as he dares not let loose the reins to his will in all things, is not oppressed

by servitude, but is governed and sustained." Ultimately we arrive at this distinction. "Herein lies the difference between a free subject and a servant, that he is free indeed who serves his city only; but a servant is he who also serves his fellow-subject. All other liberty is an exemption from the laws of the city, and proper only to those that bear rule."

The freeman the servant of the city.

62. "A father," says Hobbes, "with his sons and servants, grown into a civil person by virtue of his paternal jurisdiction, is called a family." The family being expanded, and grown to be formidable, becomes an "hereditary kingdom." "It differs," he says, "from an institutive monarchy, being acquired by force in the original and manner of its constitution; yet, being constituted, it hath all the same properties, and the right of authority is everywhere the same." To these words we bespeak our reader's attention. Controversies of the greatest moment are involved in them, controversies which will come very speedily under our notice, some which affect our own more than any previous period. The author himself dwells little upon them; he introduces them chiefly as a preface to some remarks on the right of succession. No such right has to be considered with reference to a democracy or an aristocracy; "the people has no successor." Except all the nobles were to die together, one would be substituted for another by the rest. The subject therefore concerns only an absolute monarchy; a temporary ruler being, as before said, not a monarch, but a minister. Every monarch in an hereditary kingdom, as in an institutive, may by his will make a successor, just as he may give or sell away his dominion. If he has not disposed of his power in his life time or by his last testament, then "we must judge of the successor according to the signs of his will." It will be assumed that he prefers his subjects to be under a monarchical government; that he would rather have his own child a king than another; that he would rather have a male successor than a female; that, since the power cannot be divided, he would rather have the eldest than a younger; that, failing children, he would rather have his brothers and sisters than strangers. The customs of particular places may modify or contradict these conclusions; but, in the absence of such customs, they will hold, and are the best that can be had.

Definition of a family.

§ 10, p. 122.

Grounds of a hereditary kingdom.

Succession determined by the Monarch's will.

How this will is to be guessed.

63. The question of the respective advantages of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, comes next. As might be expected, Hobbes passes over with some contempt the theological arguments in favour of monarchy. But, on the other hand, he treats with still more contempt the arguments against a one ruler from the notion of its being unreasonable that one man should be able at his own pleasure to dispose of a number.

Comparison between the three kinds of government according to their several inconveniences, c. x.

This reason, he says, is "suggested by envy." "Equality is the state of war, inequality was introduced by general consent." Whether the inequality leads to the dominion of a few or of one, makes no difference in principle. The question is therefore simply; which brings with it the greatest grievances to the subject—the command of one man or of many? It is decided with little hesitation. Far more inconveniences result from the government of the many than of the one. What they are the reader will easily conjecture; no one is able to condense them better than our author. He is not, however, content till he has clenched his conclusions by passages of Scripture. As the starting-point of his political philosophy is, that the original of institutive or political government is from the consent of the multitude, and that they voluntarily dispose of their power to some ruler, a less courageous man might have found himself a little embarrassed by the Jewish theocracy. Hobbes is not the least embarrassed. He quotes the words, "*If ye will obey my voice indeed, ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests*," as a proof that "*such* was the beginning of God's government over the Jews, instituted by Moses;" the words, "*All the people saw the thunderings and lightnings, and said unto Moses, speak thou unto us, and we will hear*," as a proof that "*such* also was the beginning of Moses's power under God, or his vicegerency." After these proofs that he possessed, at least as perfectly as any of his Episcopal or Puritan foes, the power of compelling the words of Holy Writ to give out a meaning that was first put into them, we need scarcely say that every one of his propositions respecting dominion can be established by sure warrants from the Old and New Testament. One instance of the author's valour must not be passed over. The passage in the eighth chapter of the First Book of Samuel, in which the prophet exhibits all the mischiefs which the Jews were bringing upon themselves by choosing a man to be the leader of their armies, "*He will take your daughters to be confectionaries, he will take your vineyards and give them to his servants*," &c., is accepted as an instance of that absolute power with which God designed to invest the Jewish king.

Monarchy preferred.

Appeals to the Bible, c. 11.

The duties of rulers, cap. xiii.

64. The twelfth chapter "On the internal causes tending to the dissolution of any Government," leads to some startling applications of the doctrines previously laid down. But they are so obvious and inevitable that we need not dwell upon them. The next chapter "Concerning the duties of them who bear rule," ought to be read carefully, as it contains what most will feel to be important qualifications of the extreme theory of absolutism. "The duties of rulers are contained in this one sentence; the safety of the people is the supreme law. For

although they who among men obtain the chiefest dominion cannot be subject to laws properly so called, that is to say, to the will of men, because to be chief and subject are contradictions; yet is it their *duty* in all things to yield obedience unto right reason, which is the natural, moral, and divine law." Is this assertion deduced from the theory of Hobbes, or is it a limitation of that theory? He himself treats it as a deduction. "Because dominions were constituted for peace's sake, and peace was sought after for safety's sake; he who being placed in authority shall use his power otherwise than to the safety of the people, will act against the reasons of peace, that is to say, against the laws of nature." Safety refers to the common weal, not to the weal of some particular class or person. Safety involves the enjoyment of life as well as the preservation of life. No doubt, it involves also the using all means which may contribute to the eternal salvation of the people, supposing the rulers know what those means are. At all events it involves these four earthly considerations: the defence against foreign enemies, the preservation of peace at home, that the subjects may be enriched as much as may consist with public security, and that they enjoy a harmless liberty. The means of defence against enemies need not be enumerated. To the preservation of internal peace it is necessary that men should be delivered from doctrines which disturb the public peace. This cannot be done chiefly by suppressing those doctrines. Therefore sound doctrines must be taught in academies. "I conceive it," says Hobbes, "to be the duty of supreme officers to cause the true elements of civil doctrine to be written, and to command them to be taught in all the colleges of their several dominions." Since want disposes to sedition, the ruler must do what he can to see that the public burdens be equally borne. Since ambition disturbs peace, a judicious distribution of rewards and punishments must encourage those who are disposed to be obedient and keep down the factious. Still more should the ruler labour to dissolve and dissipate factions themselves. Not much is said by Hobbes respecting the enriching of subjects which would commend itself to the modern political economist. He approves of sumptuary laws. "Since there are three things only, the fruits of the earth and water, labour, and thrift, which are expedient for the enriching of subjects, the duty of commanders in chief shall be conversant only about those three." The harmless liberty with which Hobbes would indulge subjects is not, of course, the liberty of exemption from any civil laws; but the liberty of not being interfered with by laws in all the little circumstances of their life; the liberty of not undergoing any greater penalties than the laws impose, which shall be only such

§ 2, p. 166. Salus populi suprema Lex.

P. 166, § 2.

Safety involves happiness or well-being, § 4 and 5.

What a ruler can do to promote earthly happiness.

Instruction in sound doctrines. § 9, p. 171.

The factions and factions to be discouraged, § 12, 13, pp. 175, 176.

Hobbes as a Political Economist.

What liberty should be left to subjects.

as are just necessary for counteracting the evil tendency which is to be kept down; finally, the liberty of being defended against unjust judges.

Distinctions and Definitions, c. xiv., pp. 182-202.

Counsel and Law.

Contracts and Laws, § 2, p. 184.

Law and Right, § 3, p. 185.

Law, Divine and Human. Law, Natural and Positive.

Laws of Men and of Nations.

Civil Laws, Distributive and Penal.

§ 10, p. 191.

65. The last chapter of this book is occupied in ascertaining the meaning of the words *Law* and *Transgression*. Law is sometimes confounded with *Counsel*. They differ in many ways. "*Law* belongs to him who hath power over them whom he advises, counsel to them who have no power. To follow what is prescribed by law is *duty*, what by *counsel* is *free-will*. *Counsel* is directed to his end that receives it, *law* to his that gives it." Next, Law is confounded with *Contract* or *Covenant*. "Contract is a promise, law a command. In contracts we say, 'I will do this;' in laws, 'Do this.'" Thirdly, *law* is confounded with *right*. "Law is a fetter, right is freedom; they differ like contraries." We have alluded to Hooker's division of laws; Hobbes divides them, "according to the diversity of their authors," into divine and human. "The divine" . . . "is natural, or moral and positive. Natural is that which God hath declared to all men by his eternal word, born with them, to wit, their natural reason; and this is that law which in this whole book I have endeavoured to unfold. Positive is that which God hath revealed to us by the word of prophecy, wherein he hath spoken unto men as a Man. Such are the laws which he gave to the Jews concerning their government and divine worship. They may be termed the Divine civil laws, because they were peculiar to the civil government of the Jews, his peculiar people." He again divides the natural law into that of men, and into that of cities, which may be called that of nations. All human law is civil. Civil laws are divided, "according to the diversity of their subject-matter," into sacred and secular. According to the offices of the legislator they are divided into two parts, the one distributive, the other penal. Not that these two can be really separated; all law must have a penalty annexed to it. The commands of the Decalogue are civil laws, though some of them are also natural laws. The law of nature commands us to keep all the civil laws, therefore, "though the law of nature forbid theft, adultery, &c.; yet, if the civil law command us to invade anything, that invasion is not theft, adultery, &c. For when the Lacedæmonians of old permitted their youths to take away other men's goods, they commanded that these goods should not be accounted other men's, but their own who took them; and therefore such surreptions were no thefts."

Sin in its largest sense, c. xiv., § 16, p. 195.

66. Though we are still in the book of *Dominion*, we are approaching the third of the topics into which Hobbes has divided his treatise; for in this chapter he finds it necessary to

give us his definition of *Sin.* "Sin, in its largest signification, comprehends every deed, word, and thought against right reason. For every man by reasoning seeks out the means to the end which he propounds to himself. If, therefore, he reason right, that is to say, beginning from most evident principles, he makes a discourse out of consequences continually necessary, he will proceed in a most direct way. Otherwise, he will go astray; that is to say, he will either do, say, or endeavour somewhat against his proper end, which, when he hath done, he will indeed, in reasoning, be said to have erred, but in action and will to have sinned. For sin follows error, just as the will does the understanding. And this is the most general acceptation of the word, under which is contained every imprudent action, whether against the laws, as to overthrow another man's house, or not against the law, as to build his own upon the sand." This is a great and classical passage, most necessary to the understanding of the Malmesbury philosophy. It is illustrated and expounded in the sentences which follow. In them he explains the hopelessness of arriving at any knowledge of good or evil from the judgments of men respecting either. "Through the diversity of our affections it happens that one counts that good which another counts evil; and the same man, what now he esteems for good, he immediately after looks on as evil, and the same thing which he calls good in himself he terms evil in another. For we all measure good and evil by the pleasure or pain we either feel at present or expect hereafter." The result is this—"That the city is to determine what with reason is culpable. So as a fault, that is to say, a sin, is that which a man does, omits, says, or wills, against the reason of the city, that is contrary to the laws." The reader will observe that here, as elsewhere, though faults and sins are identical in the nomenclature of Hobbes, he by no means excludes the idea of internal malice, or confounds it with outward transgression. He goes on to distinguish between those who "do somewhat against the laws through human infirmity, although desiring to fulfil them," and those whose "minds are against the laws." The first he describes as good men, even when they sin; the last, as wicked. Thence he passes to a curious disquisition into the nature of the sin of Atheism. He decides that it is a sin of imprudence. He wished very much, he says, to find out that it was a sin of injustice; but since he sees the Atheist called in Scripture "a fool," he thinks that is the proper name for him. He does not, however, maintain that he is excused by his imprudence or ignorance. "For the Atheist is punished either immediately by God himself, or by kings constituted under God, not as a subject is punished by a king, because he keeps

What it includes.

Hopelessness of arriving at the distinction of Good and Evil from human opinions, p. 196.

Internal wickedness recognized by Hobbes.

Atheism, § 19, p. 197, and Note to p. 198.

P. 199

Treason.

Punishment of Traitors, § 22, p. 201.

The endurance of punishment does not clear the offence.

not the laws, but as one enemy by another, because he would not accept of the laws; that is to say, by the right of war, as the giants warring against God. For whosoever are not subject either to some common lord or one to another, are enemies among themselves." The sin of Treason is treated nearly in the same way. It is not the violation of a particular law (though a lawgiver may make some acts treasonable which were not so by the natural law), but it is a rebellion against the foundation of the society—a refusal to acknowledge the dominion which holds it together. "Hence it follows that rebels, traitors, and all others convicted of treason are punished, not by civil, but natural right; that is to say, not as civil subjects, but as enemies to the government,—not by the right of sovereignty and dominion, but by the right of war." Finally, he repudiates the distinction between active and passive obedience, maintaining that it is absurd to suppose a man may purchase a license to violate the laws by submitting to the penalty which they inflict. "As if that could be expiated by penalties constituted by human decrees, which is a sin against the law of nature, which is the law of God, or as though they sin not who sin at their own peril."

Book iii., Religion.

God's kingdom over the earth, cap. i, § 2, p. 294.

Who are not reckoned in the kingdom of God in its strict sense, p. 205.

67. How the subject of religion connects itself with the foregoing topics Hobbes explains at the beginning of his fifteenth chapter. He has proved that the state of nature or absolute liberty "is an anarchy or hostile state, that the precepts whereby to avoid this state are the laws of nature, that there can be no civil government without a sovereign, and that they who have gotten this sovereign command must be obeyed simply; that is to say, in all things which impugn not the commandments of God." Hence it becomes necessary to know what the force of this exception is—what those commandments are which may affect our civil obedience. The Lord is said by the Psalmist to be the King of all the earth. But this is not the kingdom of God which the Scripture speaks of, or which concerns our present subject. "He is said to reign who rules . . . . by precepts and threatenings. And, therefore, we count not inanimate nor irrational bodies for subjects in the kingdom of God, although they be subordinate to the Divine power, because they understand not the commands and threats of God; nor yet the Atheists, because they believe not that there is a God; nor yet those who, believing there is a God, do not yet believe that he rules these inferior things; for even these, although they be governed by the power of God, yet do they not acknowledge any of His commands, nor stand in awe of His threats. Those only, therefore, are supposed to belong to God's kingdom who acknowledge Him to be the Governor of all things, and that He

hath given His commands to men, and appointed punishments for the transgressors. The rest we must not call subjects, but enemies of God."

68. "How orthodox the philosopher of Malmesbury is!" some of our readers will exclaim. Perhaps they will not think him less so when we inform them that he supposes the laws of God to be declared in a threefold manner,—*first*, by the tacit dictates of right reason; *next*, by immediate revelation; *thirdly*, by prophecy, to which answer the three manners by which we are said to hear God—right reasoning, sense, and faith. They will learn, probably with satisfaction and surprise, that he attributes "a twofold kingdom unto God,—natural, in which He reigns by the dictates of right reason, and which is universal over all who acknowledge the Divine power, by reason of that rational nature which is common to all; and prophetical, in which He rules also by the word of prophecy, which is peculiar, because He hath not given positive laws to all men, but to His peculiar people, and to some certain men elected by Him." He proceeds, in the same strain and spirit, to affirm, that "God in His natural kingdom hath a right to rule and to punish those who break His laws, from His sole irresistible power." This is the real ground of all things. Mere sovereignty, mere Omnipotence is the foundation of all justice and right. No one has ever asserted this principle so clearly as Hobbes; no one has ever so consistently built a system upon it. He goes on to affirm, that since "God has the right of sovereignty from His power, the obligation of yielding Him obedience lies on men by reason of their weakness." This absolute Sovereign rules, however, by those natural laws which have already been set down in chapters ii. and iii. In other words, He dictates those moral virtues which lead to peace. These natural laws or moral virtues have been sufficiently set forth already; our business is now to consider what laws respecting Divine worship can be deduced by the same method.

How the laws of God are declared, § 3, p. 205.

The power of God the foundation of His kingdom.

Weakness the foundation of man's obedience.

69. On this subject, also, Hobbes will be found to accord with the most approved and popular religious teachers of our day. Assuming that worship must be paying honour to certain attributes of God, he gradually arrives at the conclusion that "we honour not God worthily if we ascribe less power or greatness to Him than possibly we can. But every finite thing is less than we can; for most easily we may always assign and attribute more to a finite thing. . . . . And although this word *Infinite* signify a conception of the mind, yet it follows not that we have any conception of an *infinite thing*. For when we say that a thing is infinite, we signify nothing but the impotency in our own mind; as if we should say, we know not whether or

How he proceeds to abstract an Infinite, p. 214.

where it is limited. Neither speak they honourably enough of God who say, we have an *idea* of Him in our mind; for an idea is our conception; but conception we have none, except of a finite thing." On this ground he proceeds to affirm that worship must not attribute to God *parts*, *place*, *movement*, *rest*, *repentance*, *anger*, *pity*, "*appetite*, *hope*, *concupiscence*, and that *love* which is also called *trust*," for they are signs of *poverty;* or any *passive faculty*, "for suffering belongs to a limited power;" or *will*, in any sense in which it is like our will, or *sight*, or *acts of sense*, or *knowledge*, or *understanding*, as we use them. "He, therefore, who would not ascribe any other titles to God than what reason commands, must use such as are either *negative*, as *infinite*, *eternal*, *incomprehensible;* or *superlative*, as *most good*, *most great*, *most powerful*, &c.; or *indefinite*, as *good*, *just*, *strong*, *Creator*, *King*, and the like; in such sense as not desiring to declare what He is (which were to circumscribe Him within the narrow limits of our phantasy), but to confess his own admiration and obedience, which is the property of humility, and of a mind yielding all the honour it possibly can do." Again we ask our nineteenth century readers, whether a man is not very liable to the charge of heresy who dissents from the theological dogmas of Thomas Hobbes?

The exclusion of all human qualities, p. 215.

The negative and the indefinite.

70. The same may be said of the passages which follow. He maintains the importance of public worship and of a uniformity of worship for cities. He affirms that we must not "dispute of the Divine nature," and "that their speech is inconsiderate and rash who say that this or that doth not stand with Divine justice." "The city—that is to say, they who have the power of the whole city—shall judge what names or appellations are more, what less honourable for God; that is to say, what doctrines are to be held and professed concerning the nature of God and His operations." Again, "We must obey the city in whatsoever it shall command to be used for a sign of honouring God; that is to say, for worship, provided it can be instituted for a sign of honour, because that is a sign of honour which by the city's command is used for such." Thus we arrive at a fixed and universal rule. "It may, therefore, be concluded that the interpretation of all laws, as well sacred as secular (God ruling by the way of nature only), depends on the authority of the city; that is to say, that man or council to whom the sovereign power is committed, and that whatsoever God commands He commands by his voice. And on the other side, that whatsoever is commanded by them, both concerning the manner of honouring God and concerning secular affairs, is commanded by God himself." Ought we, then, it is asked, to obey the city if it command us to affront God, or forbid us to worship Him? Hobbes answers,

§ 15, p. 218. Disputes about the Divine nature dangerous.

The city must decide.

§ 17, p. 222.

"No." Worship implies honour; to affront is to dishonour. "Not to worship at all cannot by any man be understood for a manner of worshipping." Next, are we to worship God in an image if the city commands it? Hobbes answers, "Yes." "That worship is instituted in sign of honour. . . . . It increaseth God's honour among those who do so account of it." There is, however, a qualification to this statement. It does not lie in the fact that those are limiting God who worship Him in an image, though that is undoubtedly true; because the rulers, not the subjects, are answerable for that limitation. "But in the kingdom of God, by way of covenant, whether old or new, where idolatry is expressly forbid, though the city commands us to do it, yet we must not do it." With respect to names, attributes, and actions, introduced into the worship of God, which may be disputed, the reason of the city must be obeyed. On the other hand, the ascribing to princes attributes signifying that they have a sovereignty independent of God, or that they are immortal, or of infinite power, and the like, as well as acts of sacrifice to them, ought to be abstained from, even though they command it. Genuflexions, prostrations, &c., may only intimate an acknowledgment of the civil power. Atheism may, in some sort, be looked upon as treason against the Divine Majesty. "For sins proceed here just as if we should suppose some man to be the sovereign king, who, being himself absent, should rule by his viceroy; against whom still they would transgress who should not obey his viceroy in all things, except he usurped the kingdom to himself, or would give it to some other. But they who should so absolutely obey him as not to admit of this exception might be said to be guilty of treason."

Limitation to the power of the City, p. 222.

Worship of Idols.

Offering sacrifices to Kings as independent Gods.

The King and the Viceroy, § 19, p. 226.

71. We have seen that Hobbes speaks of a kingdom of God under the old and new covenants. What he means is explained to us in the two following chapters. Men are in danger of two evils—Atheism and Superstition. It pleased God to call forth Abraham, that he might deliver men from these two dangers. "From him the kingdom of God, by way of covenants, takes its beginning." The covenant would have been unnecessary if it had merely implied a bare acknowledgment of the power and dominion which God had naturally over men. "The God of Abraham signified, not simply God, but *that* God which appeared unto him; even as the worship which Abraham owed unto God in that notion was not the worship of reason, but of religion and faith, and that which not reason, but God had supernaturally revealed." We read, however, of no laws given to Abraham except the sign of the covenant itself Abraham, therefore, was obliged to nothing but the laws of nature, rational worship, and circumcision. "Abraham was the interpreter of all laws, as

Cap. xvi., God's kingdom under the old Covenant.

The call of Abraham, for what end?

What Laws were given to him, § 5, p. 236.

well sacred as secular, among those that belonged to him." "His subjects could not sin in obeying him, provided that Abraham commanded them not to deny God's existence or providence, or to do somewhat expressly contrary to the honour of God. In all other things the Word of God was to be fetched from his lips only, as being the interpreter of all the laws and words of God. For Abraham alone could teach them *who* was the God of Abraham, and in what manner he was to be worshipped."

Abraham's royalty.

The Patriarch Sovereigns.

72. By this manner of stating the case it is evident that Hobbes gets rid of the difficulty which would result from supposing the existence of a state of patriarchal society antecedent to a civil government. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, are princes, whom their subjects obey in religious and secular matters. Still, he admits a distinction between the condition of things under them, and that which followed the proclamation of the law. "By the covenant made at Mount Sinai, the consent of each man being had, there becomes an *institutive kingdom of God* over them. That kingdom of God so renowned in Scriptures and writings of divines, took its beginning from this time." The right of this kingdom stood in the covenant. The laws of the kingdom are of three kinds. "Some oblige naturally, being made by God as the God of Nature, and had their force even before Abraham's time." To this head he refers the precepts of the Decalogue, from the fifth to the tenth inclusive—the precept against taking God's name in vain, and the precept against worshipping by way of any image made by themselves. *Secondly*, "There are which oblige by virtue of the covenant made with Abraham, being made by God as the God of Abraham, which had their force even before Moses's time, by reason of the former covenant." To this head he refers the First Commandment; "for in that consists the essence of the covenant made with Abraham, by which God requires nothing else but that *He* should be his God, and the God of his seed." To the same head is referred the Fourth Commandment. *Lastly*, "There are laws which oblige by virtue of that covenant only which was made last with the people themselves, being made by God as being the peculiar King of the Israelites." Of this kind are the politic, judicial, and ceremonial laws, which only belong to the Jews.

§ 9, p. 233. The Institutive Kingdom.

Character and obligation of the Divine Laws. p. 234.

P. 235.

The Laws of God and the Word of God, p. 11.

73. From the Law, Hobbes proceeds to the Prophets. "All God's laws," he says, "are God's Word; but all God's Word is not His law. *I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*, is the Word of God—it is no law. Neither is all that which, for the better declaring of God's Word is pronounced or written together with it, instantly to be taken for God's Word. For, *Thus saith the Lord*, is not the voice of God, but of the preacher or prophet. All that, and only that, is the

Word of God which a true prophet hath declared God to have spoken." What, our readers may ask, is the object of these theological distinctions? The object is to show that private men could determine nothing whatever respecting the prophets, whether they were true or not; or if they were true, what their prophecies meant. Moses was the sole interpreter of the Word of God while he lived. "That that office belonged not to private men, or any congregation made of them, appears hence, that they were not admitted, nay, they were prohibited, with most heavy threats, to hear God speak otherwise than by the means of Moses." The case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, is as much a classical case with Hobbes as with the strongest supporter of priestly authority. But he goes on to assert that Aaron, the high priest, had this authority as little as any of these rebels. He and Miriam were punished for pretending to any such right. He admits that in Joshua's time Eleazar, the high priest, had the interpretation of the laws and of the Word of God. But he argues that the high priest was then, for the time being, the sovereign, and that Joshua was only his officer. From that time, he says, to the age of Samuel, it was a priestly kingdom—it was God's government by priests. His version of the history is curious. "The supreme civil power was therefore *rightly* due by God's own institution to the high priest; but *actually* that power was in the prophets;—to them, being raised by God in an extraordinary manner, the Israelites, a people greedy of prophets, submitted themselves to be protected and judged, by reason of the great esteem they had of prophecies. . . . . If, therefore, regard be had to the right of the kingdom, the supreme civil power and the authority of interpreting God's Word were joined together in the high priest. If we consider the fact, they were united in the prophets who judged Israel. For as judges they had the civil authority—as prophets they interpreted God's Word. And thus every way hitherto these two powers continued inseparable." When we have reached the time of the kings, it is comparatively plain sailing. "Kings being once constituted, it is no doubt that the civil authority belonged to them." The kingdom, by way of priesthood, is over: the kings interpret the law, priests and prophets are subject to them. "The authority of admitting books for the Word of God belonged to them." Kings prayed for the people; kings blessed for the people; kings consecrated the temple; kings removed priests from their offices; kings constituted others. They did not offer sacrifices—that was an hereditary office in the family of Aaron. "But it is manifest, as in Moses's lifetime, so throughout all ages—from King Saul to the captivity of Babylon—that the priesthood was not

Private judgment forbidden.

All interpretation of Law in Moses: Aaron not to interfere.

The Priests have power as legal divine Sovereigns—the Prophets as actual rulers. pp. 243, 244.

No division of sacred and secular offices.

The Kings absolute rulers in all matters earthly and spiritual. pp. 245-248.

The Priests become again Kings, and interpret the Law in that right.

The Kingdom of God under the old covenant takes away no authority from the supreme earthly authority, except in case of Treason against God.

a maistery, but a ministery." After the captivity the priestly kingdom was restored. But this only means that the priests were kings. The civil authority and the sacred authority were vested in the same person. The result, then, of the whole inquiry is, that, subject to these two exceptions, no prince was to deny the providence of God, that is, to deny that God is a king by nature, and that no king could set up idolatry, that is to say, could set up another God than the God of Abraham—"their princes, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the priest, the king—every one during their time in all things" were absolute; and the people were bound to receive all their commands without appealing to any higher authority against them. "And if a king or a priest, having the sovereign authority, had commanded somewhat else to be done which was against the laws" (besides those two offences which have been spoken of) "that had been his sin and not his subject's, whose duty it is, not to dispute, but to obey the commands of his superiors."

The Christian Kingdom, c. xvii., pp., 250, 298.

The Kingdom of Christ not yet come, pp. 255, 258.

Except as far as teaching implies rule, p. 260.

74. There being no impediment to Hobbes's doctrine, but a full satisfaction of it in the old covenant, we have next to ascertain how it is affected by the new. In treating of this subject, Hobbes adheres so strictly to the maxims which are reckoned sound in our day, even among the successors of those Puritans to which he was most opposed, that we sometimes fancy we are reading the work of a preacher of the nineteenth, instead of a philosopher of the seventeenth, century. The prophets had declared that one would come who would unite a regal dignity to humility and suffering. Jesus fulfilled these prophecies. He displayed His power by sundry miracles. The evangelists set Him forth as a king. But His kingdom is not to be established till His second coming. At present all are mixed together—subjects and enemies. He has no doubt a government over His faithful ones in this life. This is, however, not "properly a kingdom or dominion, but a pastoral charge, or the right of teaching; that is to say, God the Father gave Him not a power to judge of *meum* and *tuum*, as He doth to the kings of the earth,—not a coercive power, not a legislative, but of showing to the world, and teaching them, the way and knowledge of salvation; that is to say, of preaching and declaring what they were to do to enter into the kingdom of Heaven." All this is confirmed by a very goodly array of texts—exactly those which would be quoted to establish similar propositions now. No power which it possesses, then, in the least derogates from or interferes with the right of princes. Hereafter, at the day of judgment, He will take all power and reign. Till then His power is "ancillary and doctrinal only." This limitation of His power in the present dispensation is further deduced from

the nature of a covenant. "By the new, that is to say, the Christian, covenant, it is covenanted on man's part to serve the God of Abraham in that manner which Jesus should teach" (just as in the old covenant it was covenanted that men "should serve the God of Abraham on that fashion which Moses should teach"); "on God's part, to pardon their sins, and bring them into His celestial kingdom" (just as in the other case He covenanted to give Abraham a numerous seed, the possession of the land of Canaan, and a blessing upon all nations in his seed.) All this is confirmed in the customary manner by quotations concerning repentance and faith, as the conditions by which men fulfil their part of the covenant, and by others concerning heaven and eternal life, as the blessings appended to these. "In the kingdom of God, after this life," Hobbes says, "there will be no laws, partly because there is no room for laws where there is none for sins; partly because laws were given us from God, not to direct us in heaven, but unto heaven." The question which concerns us is, What laws Christ imposed upon His disciples here upon earth? The answer is, "The laws which Christ contracts in one place" (where He sums up the ten commandments in two), "and explains in another" (in the Sermon on the Mount), "are no other than those to which all mortal men are obliged who acknowledge the God of Abraham. Besides these we read not of any law given by Christ beside the institution of the Sacraments of Baptism and of the Eucharist." How are we to describe these last, as well as the precepts, "Repent," "Be baptized," "Keep the commandments," "Believe the Gospel," "Come to Me?" The reader will at first be surprised at the answer. "We must say that they are not laws, but a calling of us to the faith; such as is that of Isaiah, *Come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.* Neither if they come not do they therefore sin against any law, but against prudence only; neither shall their infidelity be punished, but their former sins. Wherefore St. John saith of the unbeliever, *The wrath of God abideth on him;* he saith not the wrath of God shall come upon him. And, *He that believeth not is already judged;* he saith not, shall be judged, but is already judged. Nay, it cannot be well conceived that remission of sins should be a benefit arising from faith, unless we understand also on the other side that the punishment of sins is an hurt proceeding from infidelity."

Idea of the Divine Covenant, p. 260, &c.

Heaven exempt from Laws. p. 263, § 8.

Christ's Laws on earth not new, except as to the Sacraments.

Faith and Infidelity.

75. Hobbes rests much upon the words of Christ, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" By this language, he says, our Lord absolutely disclaimed all that kind of authority which appertains to princes of the earth. He re-affirmed the commandments, but He did not determine, more than they

C. xvii., p. 28. Christ's Kingdom has no reality in the ordinary sense of the word.

determine, what *is* murder; what *is* adultery; what *is* theft; what *is* the honour of the father and mother. All this is left to the decision of the city. The man is simply forbidden to do anything contrary to the civil laws. So no man can determine from His laws any questions concerning public policy, concerning commerce, science, philosophy. Hobbes, we need not say, does not protest *in the name of private judgment* against the allegation of a Scriptural authority on these points. Private judgment is what he is afraid of. He protests in the name of the city, which can alone pronounce what is reasonable. "The judges of such controversies are the same with those whom God by nature had instituted before,—viz., those who in each city are constituted by the sovereign." Nor does he thus cut off the whole social life of man from Christ's government, because he has a low conception of His divinity. He says, that "The same Christ, as God, could not only have taught, but also commanded what He would." The inference of course is, that as He has not taught or commanded anything respecting these subjects, they are left—not free, no epithet could be more inapplicable than that, but—subject to the absolute control of the human legislator.

The city remains supreme under the New Covenant.

P. 269, § 13.

76. After these deductions a Christian may be somewhat puzzled to know what dominion remains to Him whom he has learnt to call Lord and Master. Hobbes is ready with his answer: "The sum of our Saviour's office was to teach the way and all the means of Salvation and Eternal Life. But justice, and civil obedience, and observation of all the natural laws, is one of the means to salvation. Now, these may be taught two ways—one as theorems, by the way of natural reason, by the drawing Right and the natural laws from human principles and contracts; and this doctrine, thus delivered, is subject to the censure of civil powers. The other as laws, by divine authority, in showing the Will of God to be such; and thus to teach belongs only to Him to whom the Will of God is supernaturally known—that is, to Christ." Next, he says, it belonged to the office of Christ to forgive sins to the penitent; and lastly, to teach all those commandments of God "concerning His Worship, or those points of faith which cannot be understood by natural reason, but only by revelation; of which nature are those: *That He was the Christ; that His kingdom was not terrestrial, but celestial; that there are rewards and punishments after this life; that the soul is immortal; that there should be such and so many sacraments*, and the like." From these premises, Hobbes says, we may clearly deduce the distinction between things temporal and spiritual. Nothing is spiritual but what could not have been known unless Christ had taught it. The

The office of Christ.

His especial doctrine, p. 270

The Temporal power decides what the Spiritual power is, §. 14.

decision what is just and unjust belongs to temporal things and to the temporal Right. Moreover, though all the mysteries of faith are spiritual, and their judgments belong to the spiritual Right, yet "it pertains to the temporal Right to decide what is spiritual and what temporal, because our Saviour hath not made that distinction." St. Paul, he admits, does speak a good deal of the distinction between spiritual things and carnal things—between "such as the carnal man understands not, but he only who hath the mind of Christ. . . . Yet hath he not defined nor given us any rules whereby we may know what proceeds from natural reason, what from supernatural inspiration."

What the Word of God is, p. 271. § 15-18.

77. It being ascertained, then, that the cognizance of all temporal matters is left by our Saviour to princes, the question remains, to whom He has committed the judgment in spiritual matters. The reader may think that that question has been already decided, or at least that whatever has not been decided has been shown to be supremely insignificant. But Hobbes proceeds, from superabundant caution, to examine the whole question. "And because it cannot be known" (to whom Christ has committed this authority) "except it be out of the Word of God and the tradition of the Church, we must inquire what the Word of God is, what to interpret it, what a Church is, and what the will and command of the Church." It cannot be uninteresting to any of us to know how Hobbes once for all resolves these questions about which men had been disputing for centuries before his time, and have been occasionally disputing since. The Word of God, he says, omitting that sense of it in which it is taken for the Son of God, is used three ways. *First*, Most properly for that which God hath spoken. *Secondly*, For whatsoever hath been uttered by men on the motion or command of the Holy Ghost, in which sense we acknowledge the Scriptures to be the Word of God. *Thirdly*, The doctrine of the Gospel. "In this third acceptation is all that doctrine of the Christian faith which at this day is preached in the pulpits, and contained in the books of divines—the Word of God." This Word, in the second sense, as identical with the Scriptures, cannot be a mere dead voice or letter, "but a true and genuine determination." There must be an interpreter to give this true and genuine determination. One and the same person must be an interpreter of Scripture and the supreme judge of all manner of doctrines. Now, then, we may know what the Church is. We need not follow Hobbes through his different quotations, which are familiar to all. The result is, that "a city of Christian men and a Church is altogether the same thing, of the same men, termed by two names, for two causes. For the matter of a city and a Church is one—to wit, the same Christian men.

The true sense of this Word.

What the Church is.

§ 21, p. 278.

No universal Church, § 22.

The Keys.

Excommunication, its nature, and to whom it may be applied, § 26, p. 288.

No Excommunication of Nations, p. 290.

And the form, which consists in a lawful power of assembling them, is the same too. . . . Now, that which is called a city, as it is made up of men, the same as it consists of Christians, is styled a Church." The next proposition is very important. A number of Christian cities do not make up one Church; the Church generally can never be one person in the same sense as the city is one person. The next point is to ascertain how the officers of this Church are appointed. By a collection of passages of Scripture Hobbes arrives at the conclusion, that "by the custom of the primitive Church under the Apostles, the ordination or consecration of all Churchmen belonged to the Apostles and Doctors, but the election of those who were to be consecrated, to the Church." A discussion of considerable length follows on the power of binding and loosing. The result is analogous to that in the other case. "It is the Church's part to judge of the sin; the pastor's, to cast out or to receive into the Church those that are judged." The doctrine of Excommunication is, strictly speaking, involved in this maxim. Hobbes, however, takes much pains in ascertaining the meaning of the word, and then in determining to whom it is or is not applicable. He deduces Excommunication from the Jewish custom of excluding from the synagogue those who were infectious, or otherwise dangerous to their neighbours. The end of this kind of discipline was, "that being destitute for a time of the grace and spiritual privileges of the Church, they might be humbled to salvation; but the effect in regard of secular matters, that being excommunicated, they should not only be prohibited all congregations or churches, and the participation of the mysteries, but, as being contagious, they should be avoided by all other Christians even more than heathen." This being the effect of excommunication, Hobbes decides, *first*, that a Christian city cannot be excommunicated; for she must either (1.) Excommunicate herself, which is absurd; or (2.) She must be excommunicated by some other particular Church, which only means that that Church cuts herself off from the communion of the body on which she passes this sentence; or (3.) The act must proceed from some body calling itself an universal Church; but such a body has been proved to be not a person, and, therefore, can perform no acts. The *second* conclusion is, that "no man can excommunicate the subjects of any absolute government all at once, or forbid them the use of their temples, or their public worship of God." "For they cannot be excommunicated by a Church which themselves do constitute. For if they could, there would not only not remain a Church, but not so much as a commonweal, and they would be dissolved of themselves." But may they not be

Why Excommunication cannot proceed from another Church.

No Excommunication of Princes, p. 290.

Interpretation of Scripture, and where it resides, p. 293, *et seq.*

excommunicated by some other Church? The answer of Hobbes is very clever. Excommunication, he says, is treating Christians as heathens. "But no Christian Church by the doctrine of Christ can forbid the heathen to gather together and communicate among themselves, as it shall seem good to their cities; especially if they meet to worship Christ, although it be done in a singular custom and manner; therefore, also, not the excommunicated who are to be dealt with as heathen." The *third* conclusion is, "A prince who hath the sovereign power cannot be excommunicated. . . . For the city, whose will is contained in his, is that very thing which we call a Church. The Church, therefore, excommunicates no man but when it excommunicates by the authority of the prince. But the prince excommunicates not himself, therefore his subjects cannot do it." Of course, Hobbes does not deny that rebels may assume to do it; but that is a dissolution of the city. Other cities may assume to do it; but that is a declaration of war. One city can only assume to have jurisdiction over the faith of another upon the fiction that it belongs to a universal Church which has this power. But such a Church has been proved already to have no such power. Two other questions are decided in this chapter, upon grounds which the reader will now be fully able to understand. The *first* is, that "in all Christian Churches, that is to say, in all Christian cities, the interpretation of sacred Scripture, that is to say, the right of determining all controversies, depends on, and derives from the authority of that man or council which hath the sovereign power of the city." The *second* is, that in all matters the truth whereof cannot be searched into by natural reason, the city will interpret Scriptures by the help of clergymen. In all ethical, political, philosophical questions, in whatever really bears upon the common life of man, it will not want their help. But anyhow, they will be only officers of the commonwealth ultimately. "The judgment both of spiritual and temporal matters belongs unto the civil authority."

C. xviii., pp. 298-319. Obeying God rather than Man, what it means

78. We have reached at length the last chapter of this remarkable book. The title of it is, "Concerning those things which are necessary for our entrance into the kingdom of heaven." After disposing of other texts of Scripture, Hobbes is encountered by St. Peter's awkward language about obeying God rather than man. He meets it at once by admitting that, in conformity with this and a number of other texts, a man must not obey rules to the peril of his everlasting salvation. The question to be considered is, What things those are which are necessary to salvation? Faith and obedience, he says, comprise all that any men consider necessary for this end. "For the kingdom of heaven is shut to none but sinners—that is to say,

Obedience, what and to whom rendered, § 2, p. 300.

those who have not performed due obedience to the laws; not to those neither if they believe the necessary articles of the Christian faith. Now, if we shall know in what points obedience doth consist, and which are the necessary articles of the Christian faith, it will at once be manifest what we must do, and what abstain from, at the command of cities and of princes." The result of this inquiry in reference to the first subject, is this,—"The obedience, therefore, which is necessarily required to salvation is nothing else but the will or endeavour to obey; that is to say, to do according to the laws of God—that is, the moral laws, which are the same to all men, and the civil laws; that is to say, the commands of sovereigns in temporal matters, and the ecclesiastical laws in spiritual,—which two kinds of laws are divers in divers cities and churches, and are known by their promulgation and public sentences." The settlement of the question, What the Christian faith is? gives our author a little more trouble. Not much, of course, nor any which he is not perfectly willing to undertake. He declares that "The object of faith, universally taken for that which is believed, is evermore a proposition; that is to say, a speech affirmative or negative, which we grant to be true." But then we may have different reasons for assenting to a proposition. They may be derived, "not from the proposition itself, but from the person propounding, whom we esteem so learned that he is not deceived, and we see no reason why he should deceive us;" then, "our assent, because it grows not from any confidence of our own, but from another man's knowledge, is called *faith*. And by the confidence of them we do believe,—we are said to trust them, or trust in them." On this ground he distinguishes, *first*, between Faith and Profession. *That* is an inward persuasion of the mind; *this* an outward obedience." Then between Faith and Opinion. "*This* depends on our own reason; *that* on the good esteem we have of another." Then between Faith and Knowledge. "*This* deliberately takes a proposition broken and chewed; *that* swallows it down whole and entire." Here follows a passage in which there is, no doubt, latent irony, but less than nine-tenths of those who read Hobbes, either as admirers or detractors, would attribute to him. "The application of words whereby the matter inquired after is propounded is conducible to knowledge; nay, the only way to know is by definition. But this is prejudicial to faith; for those things which exceed human capacity, and are propounded to be believed, are never more evident by explication; but, on the contrary, more obscure and harder to be credited. And the same thing befalls a man who endeavours to demonstrate the mysteries of faith by natural reason, which happens to a sick man who will

Faith, what it is generally, § 4, p. 302.

Trust in others.

Faith and Profession, § 4, p. 302.

Faith and Knowledge, p. 305.

Faith a kind of swallowing without digestion.

needs chew before he will swallow his wholesome but bitter pills; whence it comes to pass that he presently brings them up again; which, perhaps, would otherwise, if he had taken them well down, have proved his remedy." Having settled these preliminaries about faith in general, he proceeds to inquire—What proposition is that which is the object of our faith in Christ? "To believe in Christ is nothing else but to believe that Jesus is the Christ, viz., He who, according to the prophecies of Moses and the prophets of Israel, was to come into this world, to institute the kingdom of God. . . . To believe in Christ, therefore, is nothing else but to believe Jesus Himself, saying that He is the Christ."

Christian Faith particularly, § 5.

Pp. 306-313. The proposition, Jesus is the Christ, includes all Christian belief.

The reception of Articles a point of obedience, p. 314.

St. Peter's command at last explained.

The escape for them who cannot submit, p. 316, § 13.

The chief ecclesiastical questions, questions of dominion, pp. 316-319.

79. Hobbes defends himself with much ability against the charge of contracting the numerous propositions of the Christian faith into this one, by alleging passages from Scripture to prove that the preaching of the Apostles was directed to the establishment of this one proposition; that the Evangelists avow it as their purpose in writing their Gospels; that, rightly considered, the Apostles' Creed is but the expansion and unfolding of this one; that this is the foundation which the Apostle declares to be laid, whatever silver, gold, hay, or stubble may be built upon it; and that the faith of the Old Testament is really contained in this doctrine of the New. But the real answer which satisfied himself, and has satisfied multitudes besides him, refers to the other of his conditions of salvation. We may accept Articles, hundreds of them if need be, as a matter of *obedience*. In a Christian city there can be no opposition between the command of God and of the city. Sovereigns, "as long as they profess themselves Christians, cannot command their subjects to deny Christ, or to offer Him any contumely." This being secured, obedience to the laws and sentences of the city is obedience to God. We have heard that it is to have different ministers for determining those things which are to be discussed by human reason, and those which are to be defined by Holy Scripture; we have heard that both alike are ministers of the civil authority. What must we do then, he asks, if we cannot obey princes? The answer is remarkable. "Go to Christ by martyrdom; which, if it seems to any man to be a hard saying, most certain it is that he believes not with his whole heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; for he would then desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ; but he would by a feigned Christian faith elude that obedience which he hath contracted to yield unto the city." After uttering these memorable words, Hobbes has little more to say. What he does say, however, bears much upon the general purpose of his treatise. The controversies, he affirms, between Christians in his

day nearly all bore upon the right of dominion. Ascertain where the dominion lies, and they are resolved. A very pregnant remark, which may give us some occupation hereafter.

Transition to *The Leviathan.*

80. It would have been a great injustice to Hobbes not to bestow our principal attention upon the book which he himself regarded, even in the latest years of his life, as that which superseded all previous works on Ethics and Politics, and contained the foundation of a new science. *The Leviathan* is perhaps more familiar to readers in general, partly from the singularity of the title. And indeed that title was, as those who have followed us through the last few pages will easily believe, not hastily chosen by its author. If it startled those who heard it for the first time, he might not be sorry. But he would only care for the start so far as it led to a consideration of that which the name signified, and thence to a better understanding of his entire theory. In his introduction he explains why he borrowed a word which had excited so much thought among Naturalists and Theologians, and in which the latter at least had discovered a number of profound and generally terrible emblems. The picture in the Book of Job, whatever terror it may have for other readers, had nothing but attraction for Hobbes. That artificial man, which he speaks of in the book *De Cive,*—that mighty person in which the Wills of all the individuals who compose a city are merged and concentrated, —is the Leviathan. It is far greater than the mere natural man, for whose protection it has been devised. He who has the supreme power in it represents the soul vivifying and moving the whole body. The magistrates and subordinate rulers are the limbs. The rewards and punishments which the supreme power can use, and by which the limbs are set in motion to their respective ends, are the nerves. The riches of individuals constitute the strength of the body. The welfare of the people is its function. The councillors, who suggest what is needful for its working, stand for the memory. The laws of equity stand for the reason. Concord is its health. Sedition is its sickness. Civil war is its death. The contracts or covenants by which the parts of this body politic are bound together, imitate that Divine word, *Let there be light,* or *Let us make man,* which went forth from God when in the beginning He created the world.

Force of the title.

The artificial man.

In the *Opera Latina* of Molesworth, *The Leviathan* occupies vol. iii.

Preface.

Hobbes, whether dealing in metaphors.

81. What! one is inclined to exclaim, is the great logician, he to whom ratiocination is everything, he who identifies ratiocination with computation, suddenly changed into a poet? Is he going to entertain us with metaphors and figures of speech? The question may well be asked. It may lead to curious answers, not unhelpful to that self-knowledge and that general knowledge of human nature which Hobbes affirms in this Introduction to be

essential for the political student. Nor should it altogether be forgotten that Hobbes gave practical proof of his admiration for the oldest of Greek poets, for the one who is the richest in similes, for the one who always connected the life of nature with the life of man. One so consistent as Hobbes was in all his likings and dislikings, could not have exalted Homer, and scorned all the schoolmen of the refined ages of Greece, if he had not recognized a real worth in the analogies of the one,. which he missed in the elaborate and, one would have been inclined to say, the more artificial dialect of the other. And yet no one can doubt the assertion of the Author, that he very much preferred an artificial man to a natural man—the artificial state to the natural state. No one can doubt that his reverence for computation was genuine, and that nothing can be admitted to be genuine in him which was incompatible with that. We shall find that he is nowhere more fierce against philosophical metaphors than in this very book. He must then, we conceive, be accepted as a witness—the most remarkable, because, in one sense, the most reluctant witness—to an actual, necessary, internal relation between physiology and morals,—the fellowship between the members of the human body being the best expression of the fellowship between the different portions of human society. Whether we acquiesce in his theory about the nature of this resemblance, or reject it, we have the authority of the hardest of all logicians in favour of the fact that such a resemblance exists. Those who laugh at it as a fiction of Mystics must prepare themselves for an encounter with the Mystic of Malmesbury. To him certainly it was no fiction. He looked upon the admission of it as the great deliverance from fictions. Unless his readers were prepared to accept the belief of society as a living person, he had no hope of leading them onwards to any further conclusions—of overcoming any of the impediments to the good order of the commonwealth which had been raised by the champions of popular right, or by the champions of a spiritual government.

His regard for Homer.

What his use of this language respecting the body indicates.

Hobbes and the Mystics.

82. Besides the title, and the principle which the use of the title involves, there are two portions of *The Leviathan*—the first and the fourth—to which there is nothing exactly corresponding in the book on *The Citizen*. In treating of the artificial man, he considers, *first*, the material and the artificer of it, that is man himself; *secondly*, how, and by what contracts or covenants, it is framed or wrought out—what are its rights, its powers, and its authority—and in whom resides the supreme power; *thirdly*, what is a Christian state? *fourthly*, what is the kingdom of darkness? The opinions of Hobbes on the two intermediate subjects are now tolerably well known to the reader; but it is

The Divisions of the Book.

Object of the first part: wherein it differs from the first part of the *De Cive*.

needful that he should be acquainted at least with the method which is followed in the opening part of the treatise. What the natural state of man is out of society was sufficiently discussed in the book "On *Liberty*." Now we are to consider, not *men*, but *a man;* not how each one of our race is instinctively at war with his neighbour, but what each man is in himself. To understand how Hobbes the Psychologist is identified with Hobbes the Politician, how inseparable Psychology is from Politics, we should compare the statements of the two works.

Cap. i. On the Senses—*De Sensu.*

Analysis of Sensation.

The different Organs

Account of Imagination, cap. ii.

Memory.

Experience.

83. The *Senses* and *Sensation* are the subjects of his first chapter. There is no conception of the mind which has not been previously generated in some of the senses, either at once and altogether, or partially. The cause of sensation is an external body or object which presses upon some organ that is appropriate to it,—immediately, as in the sense of touch or taste; or mediately, as in seeing, hearing, smelling. This pressure, through the medium of nerves and membranes, produces a motion within upon the brain, and thence on the heart. There is a reaction or counter-pressure, the heart making an effort to free itself from the pressure by a motion outwards, which motion therefore seems as if it were something external. This apparition or phantasm is what we call sensation. When we refer it to the eye, it is called Light and Colour; to the ear, Sound; to the nostrils, Smell; to the palate, Taste; to the rest of the body, heat, coldness, softness, hardness, and whatever else belongs to the sense of Touch. All these qualities we name sensible. In the object itself they are nothing besides the motion of matter; in us they are merely divers motions. For motion generates nothing but motion, and these apparitions, whether they come to us waking or sleeping, are mere phantasms. Chapter ii. is "On *Imagination.*" After an object has been removed, or the eye closed, we yet retain the image of the thing we have seen, although somewhat more obscurely. The Imagination is the faculty which answers to this image. It is nothing else than a feeble sensation, a diluted or vanishing phantasm. It is common to men with almost all other animals, whether they wake or sleep. When we wish to signify, not the diluted phantasm, but the process or faculty of dilution, we call imagination *Memory.* The memory of many things is called *Experience.* An imagination is called *simple* when a man recollects one object which he has seen; it is *compound* when he puts two objects which he has seen together, and makes them into one; as, out of our joint recollections of a man and of a horse, we create a Centaur. The imaginations of the sleeper are dreams. The effect of waking thoughts upon dreams, and the reciprocal effect (not so commonly dwelt upon) of dreams upon

Origin of Mythological shapes.

Sorcerers, whether to be punished.

Intellect.

The Human Intellect.

waking thoughts, are learnedly considered by Hobbes. He thinks that the confusion between the vivid impression in dreams, and the actual objects presented to the senses, is the explanation of a whole system of worship. Satyrs, fauns, nymphs, as well as a number of popular superstitions which have prevailed in Christendom, had, he conceives, this origin. The removal of all such causes of fear, many of them resting, as he truly observes, upon the belief that God *can* do all things, and therefore that He *may* do whatever dishonest people find it convenient to represent that He has done, would greatly conduce to civil obedience. On which ground he is not wholly averse to the punishment of sorcerers; not because he supposes the power of the sorcerer to be real, but because he can turn his pretences to a very mischievous and immoral use. The imagination which is connected in man or in any animal with discourse or other voluntary signs, is called *Intellect.* This, he says, is common to men with beasts. The dog perfectly understands when its master summons it, or sends it away. That intellect which is peculiar to man is manifested in sequences of thought, and in bringing the names of things into affirmatives, negatives, and other forms of speech. This may be called *Conception.*

Cap. iii. On series of Imaginations.

How Imaginations become consecutive.

Curiosity.

Reminiscence and foresight.

84. Mental discourse is to be distinguished from verbal discourse. The passage from one thought to another in a man's mind is not accidental. The previous doctrine of the dependence of the imagination on the senses leads to the inference that there is no transition from one thought to another without some previous transition in sensations corresponding to it. The most apparently irregular associations have a cohesion, though one which it is often difficult to detect. The difference between the most irregular imaginations—such as those in our dreams—and the most regulated, depends upon the *desire* which we have for some end. In proportion to the strength of the desire is the deliberation about the means to that end. We recollect what means led to it in former instances, and what means to those means. An animal may have a regulated series of thoughts; that is, it may seek for the means of satisfying its hunger, thirst, love, or anger. But curiosity—the search after the use or meaning of a thing—belongs exclusively to man. *Investigation,* or the faculty of discovery (what we sometimes call *Sagacity*), has two parts. One is named *Reminiscence.* Something has been lost. We go back to the places and times we have travelled through to look for it; we ask how and where we came to miss it. The other kind of investigation is called *Prevision, Prudence, Providence,* and sometimes *Wisdom.* The man is seeking for the future result of some action. But Reminiscence

must have a large part in this foresight. It is the experience of past things which renders a man in any sense a successful guesser about that which is to come. He who can throw most

Signs.

signs together is the best *conjecturer* (from *Conjicere*). A sign is the event consequent upon an antecedent event, and conversely, the antecedent to a consequence, where the like consequences have been before observed. The security of the sign depends

Conjecture about the Past and the Future.

upon the frequency of the observation. There is a conjecture about the past as well as about the future. A certain nation was ruined by certain causes; I presume that the ruin of another nation in similar circumstances may be traced to the same causes. There is the same uncertainty about this conjecture as about those which concern the future. Prudence or foresight is not the distinctive quality of a human being; some animals of a year old will observe more accurately the things that conduce to their object, and will pursue them more wisely, than a boy of ten. Nothing is natural to man besides his birth, his five senses, and the imagination or feeble repetition of the sensible impressions. All his other faculties are acquired. Hobbes repeats in this chapter what he had said before in the book *De Cive*, that there can be no imagination or conception of the Infinite.

Cap. iv. *De Sermone.*

85. The next chapter is "On Discourse." The art of printing is great, but it is not equal to the art of letters; nor can this be compared with the art of giving names to things. This the Scripture attributes to Adam. No doubt he found names for all the things he had to do with; though it is not said that he found names for all the variety of figures, numbers, measures, colours, sounds, thoughts, relations, which his descendants have

What names Adam probably did not invent.

been obliged to denote. It need not be assumed that he used the words general, special, affirmative, negative, interrogative, optative, infinitive. Least of all need it be presumed that they talked in Paradise about entity, intentionality, and quiddity. Be that as it may, "all their treasures," says Hobbes, "however acquired and increased by Adam and his posterity, perished

The Tower of Babel.

altogether at the Tower of Babel" There every man forgot his speech. All discourse since that time must be referred to necessity, the mother of inventions. Hobbes having thus characteristically disposed of the religious difficulty, proceeds very much as we might expect from our previous knowledge of him. Names are to him all important; but they are only signs or notes for the memory. Without names there would be no tracing out of consequences; and the power of tracing out consequences is, we

What can be done without names.

are already aware, that which distinguishes man from the other animals. It would be quite possible for a man, without the use of names, to perceive the fact that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. But the step from this particular observation to the general conclusion of the geometrician is due to the use of those convenient signs by which one triangle becomes connected with all triangles. On these signs, therefore, depends that process of adding and subtracting which, as we were told before, is identical with ratiocination. The uses of speech are great; its abuses are correspondingly great. Man is the only creature who can follow out consequences; he is also the only creature who is capable of absurdity. The introduction of metaphors into speech—that is, the application of titles and qualities which concern the body to the mind—is one main cause of confusion. A mixture of our own passions and feelings with the names which we use to describe acts, is another. Philosophers have an advantage over ignorant men in the use of words; but they also invent and propagate delusions into which ignorant men would not fall. All truth, as well as all error, lies in definitions. We know by this time that truth and error cannot exist apart from words, and that the assumption that some things are good and some evil in themselves must always lead to confusion.

Passage from the particular to the general through names.

Metaphors.

All Truth in Propositions.

86. The next chapter, "On Reasoning and Science," has been anticipated in our account of Hobbes's general philosophy. It is simply an elaboration of his doctrine respecting computation. The sixth chapter is "On the Internal Principles of Voluntary Motion, which are commonly called Passions, and on the Words which set them forth." There are two kinds of motions in animals which are proper to them. One is simply vital—such as the motion of the blood, the pulse, respiration, digestion, &c. The other is called animal and voluntary—such as walking, speaking, the movement of the limbs, &c. These voluntary motions always depend upon some preceding thought; therefore, it is manifest that phantasy—that is, some sensible appearance—is the first ground of them all. The first principles of motion are called *Efforts* (*conatus*). This effort, when it is directed towards its cause, is called *Appetite* or *Desire;* when it is the effort to draw back from anything, it is called *Aversion.* The schoolmen, in their folly, said that appetite did not really involve motion—that it was only by metaphor said to be a motion. "Words," says Hobbes, "may be metaphorical; bodies and movements cannot be." Whatever men desire, they are said to love; to hate what they avoid. Desire and love are the same; only that desire commonly implies the absence of its object, love most commonly its presence. The things which we neither desire nor hate, we are said to *despise.* Contempt is a sort of stedfastness or contumacy of the heart, opposing itself to the action of certain things. This opposition may take place

Voluntary motions.

Distinction of motions.

Appetite.

Aversion.

Love and Hatred.

Contempt.

The Good.
The Evil.
The Vile.
The Three Kinds of Good.
The Pleasant.
The Useful.
Bodily and mental feelings essentially the same.
Expectation of sensible pleasures and pains produces mental joy or grief.

when the heart is occupied with objects which make a strong impression upon it, merely from not having ascertained by experience what sort of things those are that we despise. Whatever is the object of any man's longing, that is what he calls *good.* Whatever is the cause of aversion or hatred in him, he calls evil. Whatever he despises, he calls vile. These words, good, evil, vile, must always be understood with reference to the person who uses them. Nothing is good, evil, vile, in itself; nor is there any common rule of good, evil, vile, derived from the nature of the objects themselves, but only from the nature (where there is no city) of the person who gives the names, or (if there is a city) from the nature of the person who represents the city. All this we knew before; but, as it is the great maxim of *The Leviathan,* the reader must bear to be reminded of it frequently. He ought to know, also, that there are three species of good: one in the promise, which is called *Beauty;* the second in the thing itself, which is called *Goodness;* the third in the end or result, which is called *Pleasure.* Moreover, the good which in the result is called pleasant, in the means to that result is called *useful.* So evil in prospect is called *base;* in the result, *disagreeable.* What is the difference between pleasure or pain of body, and pleasure or pain of mind? Radically none. There are, as we have heard, in the body organs which meet certain objects and receive certain impressions from them. There is a resistance to these impressions as well as an acceptance. Make the action of receiving or resisting continuous and it becomes that which we have described as desire or aversion. When the motion takes this continuous form it is called Pleasure or Pain *of Mind.* The pleasant is apparent good; the painful is apparent evil. Therefore, all appetite and all love are united with some pleasure; all aversion with something disagreeable. The difference between the pleasures of the body and the pleasures of the mind is, that the latter arise from expectation—that is, from the foresight of their results—whether they are likely to be pleasant or unpleasant to the sense. The pleasures which involve this foresight of consequences are called *Joys.* Mental pains correspond to them, and in like manner involve the anticipation of sensible suffering.

Hope.
Despair.
Fear.
Fortitude.
Anger.

87. We have now a set of names of passions or motions from which we may start. All others may be deduced from these. Appetite, combined with the thought of obtaining the object, is *Hope;* without that thought it is *Despair.* Aversion, with the thought of mischief to follow, is *Fear;* aversion, with the hope of overcoming the mischief by resistance, is *Fortitude.* *Anger* is sudden fortitude. Anger, provoked by an injury done by another,

is *Indignation.* The contempt of little helps and little hindrances **Indignation.**
is *Magnanimity.* The desire of things contributing little to our **Magnanimity.**
purpose, the fear of things tending little to hinder our purpose,
is *Pusillanimity.* The desire of knowing the what and the how **Pusillanimity.**
is the *Curiosity* which belongs solely to man. The fear of invisible
powers, fictitious or historical, when they are accepted
by the city, is *Religion,* when they have not been accepted by **Religion.**
the city, is *Superstition.* When these powers are really such **Superstition.**
as we have taken them to be, it is *true* religion. Fear, without
conception whence the danger comes, or of what kind it is,
is called *Panic.* This never takes place except in a multitude. **Panic.**
Some one has perceived a cause of fear, the rest believe there is
some cause because he believes it. Joy resulting from some
knowledge newly acquired is *Admiration.* Joy which arises **Admiration.**
in a man from the imagination of his own power or virtue is
that elevation of mind which is called *Glory.* If it is founded **Glory.**
on the experience of what he can do, it is *Confidence.* If it is
built upon the flattery of others, or upon the thought of the
pleasure which is wont to follow great actions, it is *Vain-glory.*
Sudden self-glorification produces *Laughter.* It has for its **Laughter.**
origin some sudden action of a man's own, which causes him
pleasure, or some observation of a base and ungraceful act of another
man, by comparing himself with which he is lifted up in
his own esteem. It chiefly happens to those, says Hobbes, who,
being conscious of very few virtues of their own, can only preserve
their good opinion of themselves by observing the infirmities
of other men. It is the characteristic, he finely adds, of great
men to assist other men, and set them free from contempt,
and to compare themselves only with the greatest men. The
analysis of the cause of *Weeping* is more commonplace, and may
be omitted. *Pity* is the pain caused by the calamity of another **Pity.**
man, and arises from the consideration that a like one may befall
ourselves. The contempt of other men's calamities is named
Cruelty, and arises from an opinion of our own security. Grief **Cruelty.**
for the success of a competitor, when it is combined with an
effort to increase one's own diligence, is *Emulation;* when it is
combined with the wish to deceive or hinder a competitor, it is
Envy. As Appetite, Aversion, Hope, Fear, spring up alternately **Envy.**
in the mind about the same matter, and the good or bad consequences
of doing or omitting an act come successively into the
mind, so that we sometimes desire, sometimes avoid, sometimes
hope, sometimes fear; this whole aggregate of passions, lasting
until the thing is accomplished or is cast aside, is called *Deliberation.* **Deliberation.**
The name, says Hobbes, is given to it because it is
the termination of the *liberty* which we have of doing or omitting.
The process of Deliberation is not confined to man.

Will the ultimate desire.
Inclination.
The formulas of the passions in words.
The formulas of the passions without words.
Foresight of consequences
Passions necessary to life.

Beasts also deliberate. In Deliberation the final appetite or aversion which touches immediately upon the action is *Will*. All intermediate appetites are only inclinations. Beasts are endowed with will, as much as men. The scholastic definition of Will, that it is a rational appetite, must be rejected. For if it were this, there would be no voluntary action at all that is contrary to reason. But if, instead of "rational appetite," we say, "that appetite which arises from antecedent deliberation," then this definition becomes the same with that of Hobbes. We come next to the formulas of discourse, and to the other signs by which passions are signified. They may be expressed indicatively—"I love," "I fear," "I rejoice." Deliberation is subjunctive—"If this should take place, then that would follow." The language of desire and aversion is imperative—"Do this," "Abstain from that." The language of vain-glory, of indignation, of pity, &c., is optative. The language of curiosity is interrogative—"What is it?" "When will it be?" "Where has it been done?" "Why so?" These formulas are voluntary significations of passions; but they are not certain signs. Those are the most certain signs which are derived from the countenances, gestures, actions, objects, transactions of men. Since, in a deliberation, the appetites and aversions looking on to the good and evil consequences of the action about which we are deliberating are alternate, they produce a long chain of consequences, the end of which we often do not see. The excess of good over evil in that chain makes the whole aggregate an apparent good, the excess of evil over good an apparent evil. The best deliberator and counsellor is, therefore, he who by reasoning and experience hath acquired the longest foresight of consequences. He aims at felicity, not at tranquillity or freedom from passion. There is no such thing as perpetual tranquillity of mind while we live; for life itself is motion, and a man can no more live without desire, fear, and the other passions, than without sense.

Discourse, its end and process, c. vii.
Opinion.
The final sentence.
Science.

88. From those movements of passion which lead to action, we pass to those discursive movements which lead to a conclusion, whether anything has been or has not been, what is likely to be or not to be. For the balance of appetites we have here a balance of reasonings, which is called *Opinion*. As the ultimate appetite which immediately precedes the act is called Will, the ultimate opinion is called a final *Judgment* or *Sentence*. That which is called *Deliberation* in respect of an action, is called *Doubt* or *Hesitation* in respect of a fact or a conclusion. The knowledge of consequences is *Science*. It is, of course, not certain or absolute, but conditional. It is grounded upon experience. It is a presumption that if such things should be, then

such and such things will be also. Knowledge, we have seen before, concerns names more than things. It begins from definitions, and definitions must be verbal. Hobbes puts the case as broadly as it can be put. *Science is the knowledge of the consequences of one word to another. Cognitio consequentiarum unius verbi ad aliud.* The next remark is no less important. Two or more persons who know the same thing are said to be *Conscious.* The mutual testimony to the same fact is so conclusive that to speak against *Conscience,* or to make another speak against it, is always counted a great wickedness. But Conscience is usually taken for the knowledge which each person has of his own acts; and a man under the name of conscience asserts his right to maintain any opinions of his own, however absurd; nay, deems it a sin to change them. Men persuade themselves that they know the truth of things, when in fact they only know what they themselves think of them. A discourse which does not begin from a definition terminates in an *Opinion.* If it begins from the affirmation of another man it terminates in *Faith,* including under that name *trust* in the person affirming, *credence* of the thing affirmed. "To believe a man, or to believe in a man," are expressions denoting an opinion of his veracity; "to believe anything which is said," is an expression denoting an opinion of the truth of the saying. The Christian symbol, "I believe in," denotes not only a belief that whatever God says, or may say, is true, whether we understand it or not, which others besides Christians hold, but a belief in a special doctrine which is distinctive of them. When we accept the authority of a sacred prophet, or of a profane historian, we put our trust in him that he is a true prophet or a true historian. We only believe that the prophet speaks in the name of God because he says so, and we think he is true. Our faith, therefore, about things concerning God is really faith in men. We believe Isaiah when he says that God spoke; we disbelieve Livy when he says the same. If our readers dissent from these last conclusions as much as we do, we are bound to say that they are not more the conclusions of Hobbes than those of his contemporary, Pearson, whom English divines are taught not only to revere for his learning and piety, but to accept as their theological guide. Those who think, with us, that the Creed carries a higher witness with it than it can derive from any human testimony, must, with whatever reluctance, dissent from its orthodox and devout expositor, no less than from the Malmesbury philosopher.

Science inseparable from words.

Conscience.

Perversion of it.

Faith.

All faith in human testimony.

These statements cannot be imputed to Hobbes as singular or heretical by English divines.

Cap. viii. Intellectual virtues.

89. The next chapter is "On the Intellectual Virtues," and the defects which correspond to them. All virtue consists in comparison, and implies eminence. Intellectual virtues compre-

Natural wit.
Quickness and slowness.
Perception of resemblances
Perception of differences.
Poets.
Historians
Orators.
Counsellors.
How the passions affect the intellect.
Insanity.
Inspiration.

hend all those faculties which men praise in others, and wish to be in themselves. They are natural and acquired; where, by the epithet natural is understood, not that which is born with a man —for nothing is born with him except his senses—but the wit or talent which comes to men by use or experience, without cultivation or special teaching. Natural wit or talent may consist either in *quickness of imagination*—that is, in the rapid association of one thought with another—or in the steady pursuit of some one end. What we call *Slowness* or *Stupidity* is the opposite of this. The greater or less degrees of quickness, so different in individuals, must be traced to those passions of which we have heard so much: the strength of the appetite for an object determines our rapidity in the search for it. Quickness of wit has reference to the resemblances and differences of things. To perceive resemblances which others do not perceive procures for us the praise of a good wit (*i.e.*, imagination). To perceive differences procures for us the praise of a good *Judgment.* This in civil business is called *Discretion.* When the faculty of observing likenesses is combined with a certain stedfastness of mind in the pursuit of an end, it may give birth to similies and illustrations of real worth as well as interest; otherwise, this faculty passes into mere incoherency and insanity. Poets require both lively wit or phantasy and judgment, but phantasy most. Historians demand a great preponderance of judgment. In panegyrical or vituperative orators the first quality will always be in excess. In demonstration, counsel, all serious investigation, judgment alone is required. An apt similitude may sometimes make hearers more attentive, but metaphors are to be utterly eschewed. These and some other remarks of a similar kind, and an ingenious explanation of *astuteness* and *versuteness* exhaust the subject of the intellectual faculties considered apart from cultivation. Of the way in which they are trained by method and teaching, Hobbes conceives that he has said enough in the chapters on Science and Ratiocination. He has leisure, therefore, for some remarks on the influence of the passions upon these intellectual exercises; and especially for a learned disquisition upon *Insanity.* He describes madness as an injurious effect produced upon the organs by the vehemence and long duration of some particular passion. He shows how self-exaltation or depression may give rise to it. But especially he discusses the effect of supposed Inspiration in bewildering the intellect, and so is led to comment on certain passages of the Old and New Testament, which certainly appear to ordinary men to favour the notion that there is both a good and bad inspiration, the actual presence of spiritual power in and over men. In his criticism on these passages there is nothing which

The Scriptures subjected to a skilful process of exhaustion.

Enthusiasm of Hobbes against enthusiasm.

has not been said often before and since his time. That he removes all perplexities, and succeeds in making prophets and evangelists say what it was proper for them to say, every judicious reader would expect. The real interest of the passage consists in the light which it throws upon Hobbes himself—a light, strong, clear, stretching over his whole life and philosophy. He could endure anything in Letters or Science, in Bible or Koran, provided he could convince himself that no Spirit was at work beneath it; that all might be accounted for without that. Suggest the need or possibility of that interpolation in his scheme of the universe; hint that it may have something to do with that Will which is the ultimate appetite before the act; even with that judgment or sentence which concludes the process of thought; try to mingle a little of this strange, incomprehensible element in the well-compacted artificial man which is to supersede the irregular, turbulent, natural man; and the calm sage loses patience and temper, nay, awakens our fear lest his organs should become disordered by the vehemence and long duration of a particular passion, lest he should touch the verge of that insanity which had overtaken so many deluded pneumatists.

Power, Dignity, Honour.

Manners and Customs.

Religion.

The Cause

90. The chapter which follows, "On the Distribution of Sciences," belongs more properly to *The Principles of Philosophy* than to *The Leviathan.* The tenth chapter, "On Power, Dignity, and Honour," should be studied in the book itself; we only give the general definitions of the two first names. Power *is the aggregate of all the media which one possesses for the attainment of an apparent good.* Dignity *signifies the price* or *value of a man; that is to say, the price at which another would care to buy the use of his power;* oftener, the *price at which a city is disposed to rate the use* of his power. This price is the *Honour* which it bestows on him. The following chapter, "On the Variety of Habits and Customs in Men," contains a number of oracles which would often strike one as trite, if they were not expressed in the terse, decisive manner of our author, and if they did not bear upon the general purpose of showing what would become of men if they were left to their own judgments of Good and Evil. The last passage of this chapter introduces the next, concerning Religion. The desire of men to ascertain causes from the consideration of effects leads them ultimately to think of a Cause which preceded all others. They have no image or phantasm of this Cause. They can form no idea of it. They call it God, and can go no further. Those who are not troubled about the causes of natural things, are possessed by a certain fear that there may be some Power of which they are ignorant, which can help or injure them. This fear disposes them to invent various invisible Powers, which they invoke in adversity and

Fear the seed of Religion.

Treatment of this fear.

The Kingdom of Darkness.

praise in prosperity, and of which they at last make gods,—this fear is the seed of that reverence of invisible things which men call religion in themselves, and superstition in those who have a different worship from themselves. This religion has had so much to do with the laws and education of men, that it must be treated of separately before the author can proceed with his main business. We, however, who know these two causes of religion, Curiosity and Fear,—and who know also that the power which regulates all human life, and therefore ultimately whatever supernatural thoughts affect human life, is to be in the temporal ruler of the city,—may take the conclusions of this chapter for granted, and may understand that Hobbes is now perfectly able to construct his artificial man upon those maxims which have been expounded to us in the treatise *On the Citizen.* All that follows, therefore, from this point to the forty-fourth chapter, which introduces us into the Kingdom of Darkness, may be summarily dismissed. Nor need we, perhaps, dwell very long in that fearful region. The object of this part of the treatise is to explain how spiritual fears have worked for the advantage of priests of different communities and religious fanatics, and so for the disturbance of civil governments; how they arise out of crude interpretations of Scripture; how the duty of civil obedience, which Scripture enjoins, must rise above them, and be the first principle in every man's mind. A few passages, translated from the conclusion of the Latin treatise, may suffice for our purpose, and may be a not unfit termination to our remarks on Hobbes.

Hobbes reviewing his work, *Opera Latina*, vol. iii., pp. 507-510

Summary of political doctrines.

91. "In this treatise concerning civil and ecclesiastical power, which hath now been brought to a conclusion, I cannot find, after a careful review of it, aught that contradicts the sense of sacred Scripture or the civil and ecclesiastical Laws of my Country. How can there be any such inconsistency, seeing that the one object of the whole book is to demonstrate that under no pretext whatever may men violate the laws? From the sentiments of individual theologians I frankly confess that I have often departed very widely. Had I been writing merely my words in pure hearts, as in smooth tablets, I might have been much more brief. It would have sufficed then to set down these few maxims:—That men without Law, by reason of the right which all have over all things, must destroy each other. That laws without punishments, and punishments without a supreme power to enforce them, are useless. That power, without arms and resources placed in the hands of some one person, is a mere name, and of no worth for the preservation of peace or the defence of citizens. That therefore all citizens, not for the sake of their rulers, but for their own sakes, should be bound, so far as

they can, to support and strengthen the State. That the way of doing this must be determined by his pleasure to whom they have committed the supreme power. This is the object of my first and second parts. Next, seeing that in the sacred Scriptures (the reading whereof our Church hath permitted and commended to all) eternal life and the salvation of individuals is contained, and every one reads them and interprets them for himself, at the peril of his own soul, and therefore it is just that their consciences should not be burdened with more articles of faith than are necessary to salvation, I have explained in the third part what those articles are. Lastly, in the fourth part, that the people might not be seduced by false teachers, I have laid bare the ambitious and cunning counsels of the adversaries of the English Church. These remarks, I say, would have been enough for candid minds. But, as I knew that the minds of men had now for a long time been possessed with doctrines of another kind, I thought I was bound to unfold all these principles at greater length; and I did unfold them as well as I could in the English tongue, at the time when that civil war which began in Scotland on the subject of ecclesiastical discipline, was waged with the greatest violence in England also, and in Ireland. Then, not Bishops only, but King, Law, Religion, Honesty, having been cast down—perfidy, murder, all the foulest wickedness (covered, however, with hypocrisy), held sway in the land; so that any one who, coming from some remote part of the world, had been a spectator of the crimes that were perpetrated then, would have affirmed that no sense of Divine justice was left amongst us. This doctrine of mine could do little good then—little, I say, but still some. I hoped that when the war was at an end it might do more good. The democrats conquered, and established their democracy; but they speedily lost that which was the price of their great wickedness. A single tyrant occupied England, Ireland, and Scotland, and turned to mockery the democratic wisdom as well of their laymen as of their ecclesiastics. The people, tired with war, despised itself and its leaders as much as it had admired itself and its leaders before. When at last the legitimate king was restored, they entreated pardon—that is, confessed their folly. A universal amnesty was granted. Who could believe that these seditious principles were not yet extinguished, or that any one besides the democrats could wish to get rid of this peaceful doctrine of mine? That this may not come to pass, I have determined to express it again in Latin. I see that the strifes of men about opinions and the superiority of their own wits cannot be ended by arms. Evils of this kind must be extinguished in the way in which they arose. The minds of our

The Theology of Hobbes.

His war with the Puritans.

The Civil War.

Triumph of the rebels.

Cromwell.

The Restoration.

Duty of the Universities.

citizens had been gradually infected by the writers of heathen politics and philosophy. This democratic ink must be blotted out by preaching, writing, disputing. I know not how this can be done, except by the Universities. Let them give the same help to the defence of the royal power which they gave in former days to the defence of the priestly power. Let us all work to the utmost, that our internal discords may not make us the victims of some external enemy."

Passive obedience not of the Hobbes type.

Hobbes and Locke.

Direct opponents of Hobbes.

92. If the Universities did not at once abandon their heathen politics and philosophy—to that reform Hobbes and his Puritan foes might have been equally disposed—they, at least, showed no reluctance to follow the counsel with which he concluded. His own *Alma Mater* did what she could to prove that her zeal for Charles II. was not less than the zeal of the Oxford of other days for any Prelate had been. His theory of passive obedience had a host of zealous practical disciples. Happily, the very completeness of the theory made it unfit for the minds of those who would have been most eager to embrace it; happily, the scholars, finding that they could not follow the Master throughout, gave themselves to guides whom he would have looked upon with unutterable contempt, if there was any contempt which he could not utter. The position of Hobbes in reference to his friends and foes is certainly the most curious in philosophical history. To illustrate it would require and would reward the diligence of the most consummate student of the Philosophy, Theology, and Politics of the seventeenth century. What we shall have to say on the subject, we reserve for the time when it will be necessary for us to trace the intellectual relation between the Malmesbury hater of Puritans, and the semi-Puritan of Wrington—between the ablest defender of Absolutism and the most admired champion of Whiggism. For the present we must leave the controversies which Hobbes provoked by his metaphysics and his political theories in our country, to examine the lessons of some of the eminent thinkers in France and Holland, whose minds were moving in quite another direction from his, and who were to produce the most different effect upon the spirit of Europe.

Choice of subjects how to be made.

93. In choosing the Moralists and Metaphysicians of whom it is possible to speak at any length, in such a sketch as this, we must be determined mainly by the influence which they have exercised over subsequent generations. This will be the test of their real importance as representatives of their own. Amidst the multitude of names which present themselves to us, in the seventeenth century, a few stand forth as parents of schools of thought in the eighteenth century and in our own; as marking out lines and courses of speculation which have

Influence on after-times the sign of an authors place among his fellows.

characterized the nations to which they belong; as throwing light upon different sides of the history of their time; as connecting the movements of the world with the movements of the schools. On these it behoves us to dwell, leaving the secondary personages to be commemorated in dictionaries of Philosophical Biography, or only noticing them as they chance to become associated with the principal figures. If a Historian does not enforce upon himself such a rule as this, his task will become hopeless to himself—useless to his reader. No Englishman who has really considered the progress of his country's mind under the Brunswick dynasty, or who takes any account of what is passing around him, will accuse us of having paid a disproportionate attention to Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes. By every one of the titles which we have enumerated, they have a claim to the most serious study we can bestow upon them. And a Frenchman would have the best right to complain that the age of the Encyclopedists was made as incomprehensible as the age of Cousin and of Comte, by any Historian who did not lead his readers to reflect on the life and writings of René Descartes.

René Descartes.

Family of Descartes. (See the Biography which accompanies the *Eloge* of Thomas; revised by Cousin in his edition of the *Works of Descartes*.)

94. Bacon had already passed through all the early stages of his professional and, we may say, of his Philosophical life, when Descartes came into the world. He was born at La Haye, in Touraine, in the year 1596. His father was a member of the Parliament of Bretagne. His family was an honourable one; it boasted of military as well as of civil distinctions. He had weak health, lost his mother at the moment of his birth, was greatly indebted to the tenderness of a nurse towards whom he always afterwards exhibited an almost filial affection. In 1604 he went to the College at La Flèche. There his taste turned towards poetry. He read books with much boyish ardour for some time, became disgusted with reading when about fifteen, but imbibed a taste for Mathematics which did not forsake him. At eighteen he was in Paris, left to himself, and yielding to the perilous temptations of a capital. In his nineteenth year he had withdrawn into an obscure lodging in the Faubourg St. Germain, and was again devoting himself to solitary study. For two years, it is said, he dwelt there unknown to any of his friends: it was by accident that his retreat was discovered. In 1617 he was in Holland, just at the time when the disputes between the Gomarists and the Arminians were mixing themselves with the political conflicts of the United Provinces. He did not go there to take part in these conflicts, but to be an actual soldier of Prince Maurice. The spirit of his fathers was in the young student. At one time it seemed as if he might have spent his life as a soldier of fortune. He served again under Maximilian of Bavaria, at the beginning of the

His Education.

Mathematics.

The Recluse.

The Soldier

Service in Holland and Germany.

thirty years' war; then under the Emperor. At twenty-five, he was wearied of this profession; travelled through most of the countries of Europe, narrowly escaped assassination from some Dutch mariners, visited Galilei in Tuscany, and having seen enough of men in his other journeys, began very earnestly to study the phenomena of nature in the Alps.

Thinks of the Law.

For a while the influence of his father had nearly determined him to fit himself for some legal office; but from the first he had heard a voice calling him to another task. His restless experiments in different occupations were themselves signs to him that he was to be a seeker of truth, rather than an

Settling into a Student.

actor in the world's business. In 1629, without giving notice of his intention to any of his friends, he left France, and established himself in Holland as a thinker and a student.

Fulfils the idea of a Seeker after Wisdom.

95. No man in the old or the modern world ever devoted himself more deliberately to philosophy, in the original sense of that word. Descartes had all his life been a questioner. His zeal for books, his indifference about books, his desire to see the world in its wildest and most stirring forms, his desire to hide himself from the world, his activity in all directions, his ambition of repose, were all equally characteristic of his mind. He would read anything, go any where, put forth any energies, endure any solitude, if he could but discover on what ground he was standing. All letters, society, business, became a weariness if they were not helping him to this result. He was genuinely French; sincerely attached to his father and his family; not without

Reasons for Exile.

affection for his peculiar province; yet he made himself an exile for the greater part of his life, partly because he dreaded the effect of the climate of France, which he thought was exciting to the imagination and injurious to the calmness of his mind; partly because anything seemed better to him than importunate

Charms of Holland.

visitors and lively conversation. Holland suited him exactly, because it was flat and uninteresting; because the people were occupied with commerce, anticipating, he says, all his wants, embellishing the place in which he was dwelling, furnishing him with topics for reflection, and not giving themselves the least trouble about him. In Amsterdam, the busiest town of Europe, he could live as a monk in the Chartreuse. Italy, he said, may be very beautiful, but it is very hot; there is malaria, there are brigands. In Holland one can sleep quietly, the laws protect one against crime, there is always enough to interest, little to agitate. Descartes was mistaken. There were many nuisances which a philosopher might escape amongst the sensible merchants

Theological opposition.

of Holland; there were some to which he was more exposed there than elsewhere. It was the very centre of Protestant controversies. Much freedom had been won in the conflict with

Spain; but freedom of thought was not more prized by the victorious reforming Divines of Amsterdam and Utrecht than by the Catholics of Madrid and Rome. Voet, a Minister of Utrecht, published, in 1639, some Theses against Atheism. The doctrines of Descartes were condemned in these Theses. In 1641 Voet became Rector of the University. In 1642 the Magistrates forbade Descartes to teach the new philosophy. Professors in other Universities joined in the cry. A defence which he published was pronounced libellous. A legal process was commenced against him. The Ambassador of France used his influence with the Prince of Orange to stop the procedure, and was successful. But the ban of society went forth against the Frenchman. Protestants believed him to be a friend of the Jesuits; Roman Catholics believed him to be an infidel. Few had courage to own themselves his friends.

Voet.

General unpopularity.

96. The grounds upon which Voet rested his terrible charges, we shall have to consider when we speak of the works which Descartes produced during his residence in Holland. What concerns us more, as his biographers, is to observe that he was not cured of his disinclination for his own land by his uncomfortable experiences in the one to which he had banished himself. He would gladly have returned to Brittany, to stand by the death-bed of his father; but his brother, who seems to have disliked him, did not announce their parent's illness till he had been a month in his grave; so that the alienation from his home was more complete than it had ever been. To Paris he went three or four times. The Court seemed inclined to favour him. Mazarin at one time deliberated about granting him a pension; the beau-monde were curious, at least, to get sight of a man who was said to have struck out a new method of thought, and to have been called hard names. But he felt, he says, an ever-increasing aversion to be exhibited as a rare beast in the Parisian menagerie. The war of the Fronde was just commencing. He was grateful to those who wished to see him at their dinner-tables; but on the whole the dykes of Holland, in spite of its professors, were more quiet and more agreeable to him.

He still prefers Holland to France.

Reasons for disliking Paris.

97. Descartes, if not honoured in his own household, if disliked by learned divines, if ill-contented with Parisian salons, was not without admirers for whose admiration he cared. Two princesses mingle in his history, and give it a kind of romance. The first of these was the daughter of that Elector Palatine whose name is associated with the great calamity of Germany, and with the misfortunes of our own Princess Elizabeth. The young lady resembled her beautiful mother more than her foolish father. Descartes knew her when she was a child in arms. When she grew up she became his attached, one might say his passionate, pupil.

The admirers of the Philosopher.

The Princess Palatine.

Her hand had been solicited by Ladislaus of Poland; but she preferred to sit at the feet of the Philosopher. She had already learned six languages from her mother; but she thought that she knew nothing till she met with his works. Some of these were written expressly for her. A constant correspondence was kept up between them till his death. After it she became a kind of Philosophical Abbess, the head of an Academy in Westphalia, which, if the seventeenth century had resembled the fifteenth, might have attained to the glory of its Florentine predecessor.

Her hero worship.

98. The other female pupil of Descartes is still more memorable. Christina of Sweden wrote to him in 1647, to ask questions about the *summum bonum*. We need not inquire at present what was his answer; it satisfied the Queen. In 1649 she entreated him to come to Stockholm, and gave orders to one of her Admirals to fetch him. With some hesitation and reluctance he submitted to the royal commands. As soon as he arrived he was exempted from all the ordinary penalties of court etiquette, but exposed to penalties which proved more serious. In the midst of a Northern winter the Queen rose every morning at five to prosecute her studies. They could only be pursued under his direction. Those were the very hours which Descartes, without rising, had found most serviceable to his investigations. His greatest enjoyment and his health were sacrificed to the royal enthusiast. She was willing to settle lands upon him, to create him a baron, if he would make Sweden his home. Perhaps he sighed for the swamps he had left; perhaps he preferred his earlier disciple to her more exalted rival. He had not time to decide. In a few months he was attacked with a fever. The Swedish physicians brought forth a lancet. "O Gentlemen!" he exclaimed, "spare the blood of a Frenchman." At the end of a week he suffered himself to be bled. Then they said it was too late. The Queen sent continually to inquire after him. He evinced warm gratitude to his friends, received the Sacraments of his Church, and died with quiet devotion. Christina wished to have buried him in the tomb of her ancestors, and to have raised a Mausoleum to his memory. The faith in which he died made such a scheme impossible. He was laid in a Catholic burial-ground. Sixteen years after, his bones were carried to France; a solemn service was held at his second funeral; an oration was to have been delivered; but the Court prohibited it. The *éloge* was delayed for a hundred years, and was pronounced in 1765 by order of the Academy.

Christina of Sweden.

Her demands on his time.

His illness.

His death.

His posthumous honours.

99. We have recorded some of the events in the life of Descartes. His intellectual biography has been written by himself. His *Discours de la Methode,* which appeared in 1637,

Discours de la Methode Œuvres Ed. Cousin (Paris, 1824), Tome i., pp. 122-212.

Design of the Book.

What he hoped from it.

Does not intend to lay down rules for other men.

eight years after his settlement in Holland, is strictly a record of his philosophical experience. It is a work of immense value to any student. "I have never fancied," he says in the commencement of it, "that my mind was in any respect more perfect than the minds of men in general. I have often wished that my thoughts were as ready, my imagination as clear and distinct, my memory as large and as quick as that of some others. . . . Yet I have been led to considerations and maxims, out of which I have formed a method, whereby it seems to me that I have the means of increasing gradually my knowledge, and of raising it, by little and little, to the highest point to which the mediocrity of my mind and the short duration of my life will permit me to attain. . . . No doubt, I may be deceiving myself: I may be mistaking copper or glass for gold and diamonds. I know how liable we are to error about that which concerns ourselves, and how much, also, we ought to suspect the judgments of our friends when they are in our favour. But I shall be very glad if I can enable any one to see, by this discourse, the paths which I have followed—if I can present my life in it as in a picture, so that every one may be able to form a judgment of it; and that I, learning from common report other men's opinions about it, may gain some new help for my own instruction to be added to those of which I ordinarily avail myself. My design, then, is not to teach the method which every one ought to follow for the good conduct of his reason, but only to show in what way I have endeavoured to conduct my own. Those who apply themselves to the task of giving precepts must esteem themselves more clever than those to whom they give them; and if they fail in the least thing, they are so far to blame. But as I put forth this writing merely as a history—or, if you like to say so, as a fable, in the which, among certain examples which you may imitate, you will also find others which it will be right not to imitate,—I trust it may be useful to some without being injurious to any, and that all will be thankful to me for my frankness."

A contrast to Hobbes.

100. The reader will perceive that he is in the company of a man who, whether he is a safe guide or not, will at least be a very different guide from Hobbes. Whatever name we give to Descartes, we cannot call him a dogmatist. He will not tell us what we are to think till he has told us how we may learn to think. But let us proceed with his autobiography. "I was brought up from my childhood to the study of letters; and as I was assured that by means of that study I might acquire a distinct and satisfactory knowledge of that which is useful for life, I pursued it with great earnestness. But when I had completed that course of studies at the close of which men are

Causes of discontent in boyhood.

Inference from disputes of Teachers.

Reason of different Studies.

Worldly Experience.

Self-Knowledge.

wont to be reckoned among the learned, I entirely altered my opinion; for I found myself embarrassed with so many doubts and errors, that I seemed to have gained no result from all my efforts after instruction, except a continually increasing discovery of my ignorance. Nevertheless, I was in one of the most celebrated schools of Europe, where wise men must have been found if they exist in any corner of the earth. I had learnt there all that others learnt there—nay, not being satisfied with the sciences we were taught, I had gone through all the books that had fallen into my hands which treat of those that are the most curious and the most rare. I knew, moreover, the judgments which others had formed of me. I did not perceive that I was reckoned inferior to my fellow-disciples, though some of them were destined to fill the places of our masters. Our own age appeared to be quite as flourishing, quite as fertile in good intellects, as any that had preceded it. So I took the liberty of judging of others by myself; and I began to think there had been no teaching in the world answering to the expectations which I had been led to form." After stating why the study of languages and of poetry, though very interesting to him, did not lead him to the point he was seeking—why mathematics seemed to him a very wonderful foundation for a very poor superstructure of mechanical arts—why, though he revered theology, and desired to use it for the highest ends, he thought that he needed a divine help which would raise him far above his own poor reasonings, that he might study it aright—how philosophy, after it had been cultivated for so many centuries by the wisest men, seemed only to present a set of propositions about which none of them were agreed—and how grateful he was that his fortune did not oblige him to devote himself to any of the studies which seemed to him so uncertain, for the sake of a livelihood—how, leaving books, he then betook himself to the study of men of different humours and conditions, thinking that he should learn more from the discourses of men about the subjects with which they were conversant than from the reflections of students in their closets,—he concludes the first part of his discourse in these words: "After I had employed some years in thus studying in the book of the world, and in trying to acquire some experience, I one day formed the resolution to study also in myself, and to devote all the energies of my mind to choose the paths which I ought to follow—a scheme which answered, as I think, much better, though it involved a separation from my country and my books."

The Student beginning to take in stock.

101. Having started on this new journey, he goes on to describe, in his second part, the different stages of it. "As a man who is walking alone and in the dark, I resolved to move slowly, and to use so much circumspection, that if I did not

advance rapidly, at least I might not fall frequently. . . . I had studied a little, when I was younger, those arts or sciences which might contribute something to my object—logic, geometrical analysis, and algebra." He found, however, that logic, as it was usually taught, rather helped to explain to others that which we know already, than to assist us in learning that which we do not know. Of the other two studies, he found the first "so limited to the consideration of figures, that it could not exercise the understanding without greatly fatiguing the imagination, and the latter so enslaved to rules and cyphers, that they gave birth to an art that embarrassed the mind rather than to a science that cultivated it." He longed, therefore, to find some method which should include the advantages of these three, and be exempt from their defects. He finally determined that these four rules, if he could but practise them, would stand him instead of the different precepts of which logical treatises consist. "The first was, to receive nothing for true that I did not know evidently to be true; that is to say, to avoid carefully haste and anticipation, and to assume nothing more in my judgment than that which should present itself so clearly and so distinctly to my mind that I should have no occasion to hold it in any doubt. The second was, to divide each one of the difficulties which I might examine into as small portions as possible, this being advisable for the better resolution of them. The third was, to conduct my thoughts in order, commencing with the objects that were the simplest and the most easy to understand, that I might ascend by degrees to the knowledge of the most composite, preserving an order among those which are not naturally and obviously related to each other. The last was, on all occasions to make such complete calculations of my thoughts and difficulties, and to take such general surveys of them as would assure me that I had overlooked none. So much for logic. Descartes had learned from geometry to believe that all the subjects of human knowledge stood in a certain sequence, which may be detected if the student is watchful never to assume as true what he has not ascertained to be true, and if he is on his guard against all hasty jumps. Lines he found would be often very helpful in other studies as well as in those which are strictly called mathematical. Numbers would often serve him still more effectually than lines. The geometrical and the algebraic analysis might each be used for the correction of the other. Our philosopher had learnt not to value either for the sake of the mere mechanical results to which it conducted. They were with him only instruments for separating the false from the true.

The three instrumental studies.

Substitute for Logic.

Determination to be clear.

Use of Geometry and Algebra.

102. Descartes perceived that the process upon which he was

Provisional Morality.

entering must be in some sort a destructive one. He was abandoning the lore which he had received; he was seeking for new foundations. There was a necessity, he says, for a certain provisional morality, that he might not remain irresolute in his actions whilst he was occupied in this search for principles. This provisional morality consisted of a few simple maxims.

Maxims of Life.

"The first was, to obey the laws and customs of my country, steadily adhering to the religion in which God had permitted me to be instructed from my infancy, and governing myself in all other matters by the wisest and least exaggerated opinions which were commonly received in practice by the most sensible of those with whom I should have to live." . . . "My second maxim was, to be as firm and resolute in my actions as I could be, and not to follow less constantly the most doubtful opinions when I had once determined them to be most probable, than if they had been quite ascertained." . . . "My third maxim was, always to try to conquer myself rather than fortune. to change my desires rather than the order of the world, and generally to accustom myself to believe that there is nothing entirely in our power except our thoughts; so that after we have done our best in reference to the things that are without us, all that fails of our wishes is, in respect of us, absolutely impossible." Descartes sets down, as the fourth maxim of his conduct, one which he does not venture to extend beyond himself. It was, that the profession which was intended for him was that of an inquirer after truth. Having thus secured himself, as he conceived, against the perils of scepticism, he had less difficulty in waiting for the assurance which he was always looking for. For nothing, he says, was less his desire than to doubt for doubting's sake. Instead of loving that shifting sand, he was impatient of it; he always believed that there was a rock, and that it could be found. There was no conclusion so doubtful out of which, when he adhered rigidly to his method, he could not derive some principle that was certain. He never demolished any house in which he had been temporarily living without finding that the materials would serve for the erection of a stronger one. He always gave some time every day to mathematical studies, that he might not lose the sense of certainty while he was engaged in examining that which was uncertain. So he could contrive to pass nine years without taking any side in the different questions which learned men were debating. He doubts whether even at the end of that time he should have ventured to put forth the results of his inquiries. But as some of his friends gave him credit for having arrived at such results, and for being able to assist them, he thought he was bound to explain what he had been doing in a solitude which appeared to

The Truth-seeking profession.

A Sceptic not loving Scepticism.

Mental Equilibrium.

put him out of the reach of the ordinary help of books and doctors.

Acquiescence and Doubt both needful.

Two opposing Maxims.

The process of rejection.

Waking Thoughts treated as Dreams.

What remains?

That which cannot be got rid of.

The I and the Soul identical.

103. The next part of this treatise on Method brings us to that celebrated maxim of which we have all heard so much. Descartes ought to be his own narrator of the process by which he arrived at it. "I had long observed that, for the sake of morals, it is sometimes necessary to follow opinions that one knows to be very uncertain, just as if they were indisputable. On this maxim, as I have told you already, I acted. But when I was desirous to be occupied only in the search of truth, I thought that I was bound to take exactly the opposite course, and to reject as absolutely false everything wherein I could imagine the least doubt, in order that I might see whether there did not remain at last, in my belief, something which was entirely indisputable. Therefore, seeing that our senses often deceive us, I chose to suppose that there was nothing which is such as they make us imagine it is. And since there are men who deceive themselves in reasoning even concerning the simplest points of geometry and make contradictions therein, considering that I was as much liable to err as any other, I rejected as false all the reasonings which I had heretofore taken as demonstrations. Finally, reflecting that all the same thoughts which we have when we are awake may also come to us when we are asleep, without there being any single one of them which is true, I resolved to feign that all the things which had ever entered into my mind were not more true than the illusions of my dreams. But I perceived immediately that while I was wishing thus to think that everything was false, it was inevitable that I who thought it should be something. And remarking that this truth, I THINK, THEN I AM, was so firm and ascertained, that all the most extravagant suppositions of the sceptic were not capable of shaking it, I decided that I might receive it without scruple as the first principle of the philosophy for which I was seeking. Then, examining with attention what I was, and seeing that I could feign that I had no body, and that there was no world nor any place in which I was; but that if I feigned that ever so much, I could not feign that *I* was not; but, on the contrary, from the very fact that I was entertaining in my thoughts doubts of the truth of other things, it followed very evidently and very certainly that I was; whereas, if I had only ceased to think, though all the rest of that which I had imagined to be false was true, I had no reason to believe that I should have been; I knew from this that I was that of which thought is the very substance and nature, which for its being has no need of any place, which depends not on any material thing, so that this I—that is to say, the Soul, whereby I am that

which I am—is entirely distinct from the body, and that it may be more easily known than the body; and, moreover, that if the body were not, it would not cease to be all that it is."

Ground of security in this proposition.

The investigation of sensible notions.

Their relation to me.

Necessity of a nature not dependent on me.

What that nature must be.

How the sense of imperfection leads to a demand for perfection.

104. When Descartes reflected on his fundamental proposition, he perceived that the certainty of it lay only in the clearness of his perception that Being was necessary to Thought. He was thence led to the conclusion that the things which we can see very clearly and very distinctly are all true; but that the difficulty is to ascertain what these things are which we can see distinctly. Following out this reflection, it struck him that he was a doubting being; that doubt must be always inferior to knowledge; that the existence of doubt in any creature involves the acknowledgment of some more perfect nature. When he considered the things outside of himself—the sun, the earth, light, heat—he did not feel so much difficulty in knowing whence they came, because, as he remarked nothing in them which seemed to make them superior to himself, he could believe that, if they were true, they were dependencies on his own nature, so far as that was a true and perfect nature; and if they were not true, that they depended on some defect in his nature, which was akin to nothingness. "But it could not be the same with the idea of a Being more perfect than my being; to connect that idea with nothingness was manifestly impossible; and since it is no less a contradiction that the more perfect should be dependent on the less perfect than that something should proceed from nothing, I could not at all more make it depend on myself; so that what remained was, that this idea should have been put into me by a nature which was verily more perfect than I was, and which had all the perfection of which I could have an idea—that is to say, to explain myself in one word, which was GOD. To which I added this: that since I was aware of certain perfections which I did not possess, I was not the only Being that existed; . . . but that it was inevitable that there should be some other upon whom I depended, and from whom I had obtained all that I had. For if I had been alone and independent of any other, so that I had from myself all that little which I participated in of the perfect Being, I must have had of myself, on the same ground, all that surplus in which I knew that I was wanting, and so must have been myself infinite, eternal, unchangeable, omniscient, omnipotent—in one word, must have had all the perfections which I could take note of as being in God. For, pursuing the course of reasoning upon which I had entered in order to know the nature of God so far as mine was capable of knowing it, I had only to consider, with reference to all the things whereof I found any idea in myself, whether it was perfection or not to possess them;

and I was certain that none of those that marked any imperfection were in His nature, and that all the others were in it; since I perceived that doubt, inconsistency, sorrow, could not be in it, whereas I should myself have been very glad to be exempt from them. Moreover, I had ideas of many sensible and corporeal things; for though I had started with the supposition that I was dreaming, and that all which I saw or imagined was false, I could not nevertheless deny that the ideas of these things were truly in my thought. But since I had already perceived in myself very clearly that the intelligent nature is distinct from the corporeal; reflecting that all composition testifies of dependence, and that dependence is manifestly a defect, I judged from thence that it could not be a perfection in God to be composed of these two natures (the intelligent and the corporeal), and that, consequently, He was not so composed; but that if there were certain bodies in the world, or certain Intelligences or other natures which were not all perfect, their Being must depend upon His power in such wise that they could not subsist without Him a single moment."

All bodily accidents imply imperfections; therefore cannot be in the perfect nature.

The next step.

105. If these two famous processes of thought respecting the Soul and respecting God were reported in any other language than that of the person in whose mind they actually passed, the reader might be unjust to him, might find the examination of them far less profitable than it should be to himself. For the same reason the following passage, which will so often come before us again in connection with the teaching of Locke and the deductions from it, ought to be reported faithfully and exactly, not exhibited through our impressions:—"After this I desired to search after other truths. . . . I considered some of the simplest demonstrations of the Geometricians, and having noted that that great certainty which everybody attributes to them is owing merely to this, that we conceive them *evidently*, according to the rule which I have already laid down; I noted further, that there was nothing in them whatever which assured me of the existence of their *object*. For instance, I saw clearly enough that assuming a triangle, it was necessary that its three angles should be equal to two right angles; but I saw nothing to assure me that there is any triangle in the world. Then reviewing the idea which I had of a perfect Being, I found that the *existence* of such a Being was involved in it, in precisely the same way as it is involved in the idea of a triangle that its three angles are equal to two right angles, or in that of a sphere that all its parts are equally distant from its centre, or even still more evidently than that. Consequently, that it is at least as certain that God, who is that perfect Being, is or exists, as any demonstration of geometry can be. But the reason why so

Wherein the apparent force of the Geometrical demonstration consists.

The existence of God as demonstrable as the propositions of Geometry.

many persuade themselves that there is some difficulty in knowing Him, and even also in knowing what their soul is, is that they do not raise their minds above the things of sense, and that they are so accustomed to identify the process of consideration with the process of imagination, which is a mode of thought specially applicable to material things, that whatever cannot be imagined seems to them to be not intelligible. This is sufficiently manifest from the maxim which even philosophers sanction, and which has been adopted in the schools, that there is nothing in the understanding which has not been previously in the sense, where nevertheless it is certain that the ideas of God and the soul never were. And it seems to me that those who are determined to use their imagination in order to comprehend these ideas, do just the same as if, in order to hear sounds or perceive odours, they determined to make use of their eyes. Only there is this difference, that the sense of sight does not assure us less of the truth of its objects than do those of smell or hearing; whereas neither our imagination nor our senses would ever be able to assure us of anything whatsoever if our understanding did not intervene. Finally, if there are men who cannot be satisfactorily persuaded of the existence of God and of the soul for the reasons which I have alleged, I would have them know that all the other things of which they think, perhaps, that they are better assured—as, for instance, that they have a body, and that there are stars and an earth and such like things—are *less* certain; for albeit one has a moral assurance of these things, which is so strong that it seems as if we could not distrust it without being extravagant, it is equally true that when the question is of a metaphysical certainty, we cannot, except under peril of being unreasonable, deny that we have not as much ground to be assured respecting the subject of it: since we must not forget that we are quite capable of imagining when we are asleep that we have another body, and that we see other stars or another earth, though there be actually no such thing. How know we that the thoughts which come to us in sleep are more false than others, seeing they are oftentimes not less vivid and strong? Let the best wits devote as much study as they can to this question, I do not believe they will ever escape from their difficulty, unless they pre-suppose the existence of God. For, in the first place, that which I have already taken for a rule—to wit, that the things which we conceive very clearly and very distinctly are all true—is only trustworthy because God is or exists, and that He is a perfect Being, and that all that is in us comes from Him: whence it follows that our ideas or notions being real things, and coming from God in so far forth as they are clear and distinct, cannot be other than true. Where-

The imagination follows the sense.

The understanding does not follow them.

Inference from this distinction.

Reality of our notions.

Ground of this certainty.

fore, if we have often some ideas and notions which contain falsity, this must be predicated of those which have something in them that is confused and obscure, they in so far participating in nothingness; that is to say, that these notions in us are only confused because we are imperfect. And it is surely no less a contradiction that falsity or imperfection, as such, should proceed from God, than that truth or perfection should proceed from nothingness. But if we did not know that all that is in us which is real and true comes from a perfect and infinite Being, how clear and distinct soever our ideas were we should have no reason to assure us that they had the perfection of being true."

The vividness of dreams, what it imports or does not import.

The falsity of dreams lies in their dependence on the imagination, or the recollection of sensible things.

The reason opposed to the senses.

106. It might occur to the reader of this remarkable passage, that the vivid and expressive dreams of which Descartes speaks might have that clearness and distinctness which he assumes as the test of truth. He meets the objection before he concludes this part of his discourse. "Even if it happened that in sleeping one had some very distinct idea; as, for instance, if a geometrician discovered some new demonstration, his sleep would not hinder it from being true. The mistakes which we commit in our dreams need not lead us to distrust the truth of such ideas; for these mistakes consist mainly in this, that different objects are presented to us in the same way as they are presented to our senses when we are awake, and the waking impressions which we thus receive of external objects may be just as false as those in our dreams; as, for instance, when a man in the jaundice sees all things yellow, or when we suppose distant stars to be very small. Whether we wake or whether we sleep, we should not suffer ourselves to be persuaded, except upon the evidence of our reason. Observe, I say of our *reason*, not of our imagination or of our senses. Though we see the star very clearly, we ought not for that to conclude that he is of the size that we see him. Though we may imagine very distinctly the head of a lion on the body of a goat, we are not thence to conclude that there is such a creature as a Chimera. For reason does not teach us that that which we see or imagine is true. But it does teach us that all our ideas or notions must have some foundation of truth. For it would not be possible that God, who is all-perfect and all-true, should have put them into us if that were not so. And seeing that our reasonings are never so evident or so complete while we sleep as while we wake, albeit that sometimes our imaginations may then be equally, or even more lively and expressive, reason teaches us also that as our thoughts cannot be all true, because we are not altogether perfect, that which they have of truth

must infallibly be found in those which we have when we are awake, rather than in those which we have when we are asleep."

Physical inquiries.

The creation.

Conception of matter.

Light.

The heavens.

The earth.

The centre.

107. Having assured himself of these two first principles, Descartes entered upon a series of investigations respecting the nature of material things. He had purposed to embody these investigations in a treatise. Of this treatise he gives us some account in the fifth part of the discourse. In it he purposed "to leave the world as it was to the disputes of the learned, and to speak of what would happen in a new world, if God was creating in imaginary spaces matter enough to compose it, and if He were moving diversely, and without order, the different portions of this matter, so that there should result out of them a chaos as confused as the poets had been able to imagine; and if afterwards He did nothing else than afford His ordinary aid to nature, suffering it to act according to the laws which He had established." "First of all," he continues, "I endeavoured to represent this matter in such wise that there should be nothing more clear or more intelligible, saving that which hath been already said of God and of the soul. For I assumed that there were in it none of those forms or qualities whereof the schools dispute, nor in fact anything whereof the knowledge was not so natural to our souls that one could not even feign to be ignorant of it." He tried to discover certain laws which must be assumed in any creation, as following from the perfections of God. Then he showed how the greatest part of the matter of this chaos *must*, in consequence of these laws, dispose and arrange itself in a certain fashion which made it like to our heavens; how certain of its portions *must* compose an earth; certain others, planets and comets; and certain others, a sun and fixed stars. "Here, expanding on the subject of light, I explained what that light was which must be found in the sun and in the stars; how from thence it traversed in an instant the immense spaces of the heavens; how it made the planets and the comets its reflectors towards the earth. I added thereto many things touching the substance, the situation, the movements, and all the divers qualities of these heavens and the stars, so that I thought I had said enough to make it clear that there is nothing to be observed in those of this universe which had not, or at least which might not appear to have, its correspondent in those of the world which I described. Thence I went on to speak particularly of the earth; how, though I had expressly assumed that God had not put any gravity into the matter of which it was composed, all its parts could nevertheless not fail to tend towards its centre; how, there being water

Seas. The tides. Plants, Mines, Metals. Fire.

and air on its surface, the disposition of the heavens and the stars must cause therein a flux and reflux, like, in all its particulars, to that which is observed in our seas, and moreover a certain course as well of water as of air, from the rising to the setting, such as is observed in the tropics; how mountains, seas, fountains, and rivers, must naturally form themselves therein, and metals come into the mines, and plants grow in the fields, and generally all the bodies that one calls mixed or composite engender themselves there. Among other things, seeing that besides the stars, I know nothing in the world saving fire which produces light, I studied to explain all that belongs to its nature—how it is produced, how it is nourished, how it has sometimes heat without light, and sometimes light without heat, how it can introduce divers colours and other qualities into divers bodies, how it softens some bodies and hardens others, how it can consume almost all bodies or convert them into ashes or smoke, how, finally, out of these ashes, by the mere violence of its action, it forms glass; for this transmutation of cinders into glass I took particular pleasure in describing, seeing that there is no other in nature which seemed to me more wonderful."

Reasons for this course. Animal life. Man without a soul. The central fire.

108. Descartes protests against the notion that he assumes the world to have been created in his method. He fully believes that God made it from the beginning such as it ought to be. But he quotes the common opinion of theologians in support of the conclusion, which reason itself would suggest, that the force by which the world is maintained in being is the same with that by which it was created. To suppose a world emerging out of chaos, and to contemplate things at the instant of their birth, is easier, he maintains, than to consider them in all their existing complexity. In tracing this process of generation and growth, he proceeded from the inanimate bodies of which he had spoken hitherto, to the animals, and especially to man. But he felt that his knowledge of anatomy and physiology would not enable him to follow precisely the same course as in the other instances. "I therefore contented myself," he says, "with assuming that God formed the body of a man on exactly the same pattern as one of our bodies, as well in the outward form of its limbs as in the interior conformation of its organs, without composing it of any other matter than that which I have already described, and without imparting to it at first any reasonable soul, or even anything that might act as a vegetative or sensitive soul; save that He kindled in its heart one of those fires without light of which I had discoursed already." . . . . "For, after examining the functions which would result naturally from that presence in this body, I found therein

The blood.

exactly all those functions which might be in us, supposing all thought about them was absent, supposing consequently that the soul, the nature of which is simply to think, contributed nothing thereto; thus attributing to this body whatever is common to us with the animals, and nothing which, being dependent on the thought, belongs to us in so far forth as we are men." In order to pursue this subject properly, Descartes suggests that the reader should dissect the heart of some animal, that he may discover how strictly it resembles the heart of a man. He enters at large into the nature of venous and arterial blood, accepts with gratitude the teaching and experiments of Harvey, and leads us to observe, as the result of them, that the motive principle is that heat to which he has already referred other and lower operations of nature.

The human system.

The man with a soul.

The difference of man.

The ape or parrot.

The glory of the soul.

109. All these things, he says, he had explained carefully in the treatise which he had intended to publish. He had, moreover, shown what was the fabric of the nerves and of the muscles of the human body; what changes must take place in the brain to cause waking and sleeping and dreams; how light, sound, odours, taste, heat, and all the other qualities of outward bodies can impress upon it different ideas through the intervention of the senses; how hunger, thirst, and the other interior passions may communicate to it their ideas. But his great object in tracing the resemblances between man and other creatures was to arrive at their difference. Assign what powers you may to the animal organs, discover in the animal machine a variety and a harmony of parts which you can attribute to no machine of ours, still you cannot make the most mature and perfect animal equal to the most stupid child in the capacity of putting forth words that should express what it means. And you cannot find any animal which determines the objects to which its organs shall be directed, and is not determined by the qualities and disposition of those organs. The case of parrots proves that the want of speech does not proceed from the want of the organs of speech. The case of the deaf and dumb amongst men proves that those who have not the organs of speech may yet find signs to make themselves intelligible. The most perfect ape or parrot will always show that it is in kind different from the man whose faculties are most dull, or whose faculties are deranged. Hence the step was natural to an examination of the reasonable soul and of its origin. It could be in nowise derived from the power of matter, like the other things of which he had spoken. It must be expressly created. It cannot be merely lodged in the human body; it must be joined most closely with it, if it is to have sentiments and appetites like ours, and so compose a true man. "I had

dwelt," he says, "at great length in this book of mine on the subject of the soul, by reason of its great importance. For next to the error of those who deny God, which error I think I have already sufficiently refuted, there is none that withdraws weak minds more from the straight path of virtue, than the notion that the soul of the beasts is of the same nature as ours, and that consequently we have nothing to fear or to hope after this life, any more than the flies or the ants; whereas, if one knows how they differ, we understand much better the reasons which prove that ours is of a nature entirely independent of the body, and therefore is not liable to die with it."

The moral benefit of establishing this distinction as radical and fundamental

110. The treatise which was to contain these physical inquiries and results, Descartes says that he determined to suppress. Notwithstanding the great pains he had taken to admit no new belief into his mind without irresistible evidence, he found that the difference between his method and that commonly received in the schools was likely to awaken suspicions in persons whose judgment he reverenced. And though he saw many good reasons why such a book should be published, his habitual dislike of making books helped him to discover reasons on the other side which could excuse him from the trouble. The sixth part of his treatise on Method is occupied with the arguments *pro* and *con*. His thoughts upon morals, serviceable as he had found them for the regulation of his own life, might easily appear impertinent to other people. On these subjects "There would be as many reformers as heads, if any other save those whom God has established as sovereigns over His peoples, or those to whom He has given grace and zeal to be prophets, were permitted to attempt any change therein." But he could scarcely help feeling that he was breaking the law of doing to others as he would be done by, if he concealed any knowledge he had acquired about physics which might be useful to life. If it were possible, as he thought it was, to discover a practical philosophy, "which would enable us to understand the force and the action of fire, water, air, the stars, the heavens, and of all the other bodies which surround us, as distinctly as we know the different instruments of our artisans, we might employ them as we do those, for all the uses to which they are appropriate, and so render ourselves, as it were, masters and possessors of nature." He thought he saw how much this would conduce to the removal of disease and the lengthening of life. And he was convinced that the method he had struck out was not one that would set up his experiences against those of his predecessors or contemporaries, but rather would enable mankind to see them in their connection, and to profit by them all.

The Treatise suppressed.

Physics more tempting than Ethics.

A practical Philosophy conducive to health and longevity.

Reasons on the other side.

111. These reasons were very powerful in favour of the publication. They were strengthened by the conviction, which became deeper and deeper in the mind of the author, that his experiments would be even more useful for those who had advanced in the knowledge of nature, than for those who were only beginning to acquire it, and that the best and wisest men, those who would be most able to correct his conclusions, would be most thankful to him for the help which he gave them in reforming their own. Nevertheless, he had been determined to the opposite course by considering that the controversies which his book might occasion, as well as the reputation which it might procure for him, would perhaps hinder the work to which he had devoted himself. He was certain himself, and he wished others to feel, that the little which he had learnt was nothing in comparison of that of which he was ignorant, and of which he hoped that he might not always remain ignorant. He wished that the world should be the better for his meditations; but he did not limit the world to his own generation. It would have time enough hereafter to find out the good things which he had left, if he did leave any good things behind him. Meantime it was important that he should husband the years which might be allotted to him, and not allow them to be dissipated in controversies. No doubt the objection would occur to many, that such controversies would be useful both in detecting the errors of the author, and in spreading his truths abroad. His experience did not support this argument. Liable as he was to mistakes, and little as he trusted to his own first opinion, he seldom encountered any objection of friend or foe which he had not anticipated. The eagerness of controversialists to win a victory makes them as indifferent about truths as they are eager for probabilities; so that a good advocate is not commonly a good judge. As for the benefit that might accrue to others from these controversies, it had always struck him that an author is better able to explain himself than either his opponents or his disciples. The followers and defenders of Aristotle, he found, clung to him as the ivy clings to the tree; never ascending above it, often dragging it down. They have not studied as their author studied, not conversed with facts as he conversed with them. They can fight for their author, inventing a number of obscure distinctions, and putting forth bold dogmas to confound those who are trying to learn and discover for themselves; just as a blind man who wished to fight with one who had eyes, might drag him into a cave where one would be as well off as the other. Persons of this temper, he observes with some humour, should be very thankful to him for not publishing his principles of philosophy; for being very simple

Future generations might receive the benefit.

Dislike of controversy.

Little profit in it to himself or others.

Disciples, behind the Masters.

and self-evident, they would be like windows opened in the cave, which would destroy all its merits as a field of battle. Those of a different disposition need not be anxious to have the full exposition of his principles which he had designed. If they preferred the knowledge of a little truth to the vanity of appearing to be ignorant of nothing, they might avail themselves of the hints which he had given them in this discourse. They might work out for themselves the problems which he had worked out. They would have much more pleasure in learning for themselves than in learning from him. The habit of investigation would be far more valuable to them than all his instructions. He declares that it would be a subject of great regret to him, a serious loss instead of a gain, if he had been taught in his youth all those truths of which he had since been convinced.

The *Treatise on Method* will show his fellows how they might work for themselves.

112 Though the balance of these different arguments was in favour of suppressing the more ambitious work which he had composed, Descartes felt it a duty to put forth some minor essays, and to give the public a little report of his acts and of his purposes. Though he very much preferred repose to reputation, he did not wish it to be supposed by those who were acquainted with his general mode of life, that he was hiding himself from the world for some mischievous or some idle intent. And without expecting the public to take any special interest in his doings, he wished not to miss any advantages which he could derive from the help of his neighbours, if he took them in some degree into his confidence. There were topics on which he thought he might speak without involving himself in controversies, or making any formal declaration of his scientific maxims, and yet which might show what he could and could not do in scientific investigations. Any objections which any persons might have to offer to these books, his publisher would communicate to him, and he would take such notice of them as he thought necessary. The objection which he chiefly anticipates respecting these slighter works is, that they consist of hypotheses which he has not cared to prove. "I have called them hypotheses," he says, "to the intent that it may be known that I believe that they can be deduced from those primary truths which I have explained in this discourse. But I have deliberately abstained from making the deduction, that certain wits who fancy they can know in one day that which a man has been thinking out in twenty years, provided they have two or three words of his to guide them, and whose very liveliness and rapidity makes them more liable to mistake and more incapable of truth, may not seize the opportunity of building up some extravagant philosophy upon what they

Love of Repose.

Modest love for reputation.

Wish for help.

Hypotheses to be tested.

Protest against clever critics

suppose to be my principles, and that I may not have the credit of their fancies." He adds that he believes his principles, when they are expounded by himself, will appear to be in strict conformity with the common sense; and that he expresses them in French rather than in Latin, because he believes that those who only make use of their plain natural reason will judge them better than those who only are profound in ancient books. He concludes with saying that he has not the slightest wish to be eminent in the world, and that he shall always be more grateful to those by whose favour he enjoys a leisure without interruption, than he could be to those who should offer him the most honourable employments upon earth.

Indifference to rewards.

Mental Processes as important as their results.

113. It will be obvious to the reader of this treatise, or even of our meagre analysis, that the processes of thought which it records are at least as important as the results to which they led the author. To separate them is to misrepresent Descartes. To talk about his *cogito ergo sum*, his demonstration of the existence of God, his innate ideas, his vortices, his atomic theory, is easy. To pronounce solemn sentences upon his mistakes in respect to one or another of these beliefs is quite as easy. But when this has been done with abundant cleverness, and perfect satisfaction to the mind of the critic, he ought to be reminded that he has not so much as approached the man Descartes, that all the convictions that were so mighty in his mind are left just as they were, that all the influence which he has exercised upon other minds remains unaffected and unexplained. Towards no one is this treatment less excusable. Descartes has put forth no solemn decrees, has set up no opinions which are to confound the opinions of other men. With very great honesty and simplicity he lays bare the movements of his own intellect. He submits the conclusions at which he has arrived to all possible investigation. He asks that they may not be taken for granted. Though his faith in his own method is very profound, he does not even impose that method upon his fellows. He only desires to assist them in finding a method—to induce them to give an account to themselves of their own thoughts. A man who proposes such an end to himself must, we conceive, have been a benefactor to his kind. We cannot wonder at the admiration of his male or his female disciples. Their gratitude to him may have been exclusive; we should hesitate to call it excessive. Can the gratitude be excessive to a person who has helped us to know ourselves better, to discover more of our ignorance? He may leave us at a point where we require other guidance. If we are satisfied with his teaching, he has not taught us the very lesson which he promised to impart, and which inspired us with our first thankful impulse. But ought this discovery, which is

The Dogmas attributed to Descartes cannot be considered by themselves.

The lessons he tried to teach.

The respect shown to him not exaggerated.

only one either of our own weakness or of a greater blessing which we may obtain, to lessen our reverence and affection for him who first made us conscious of the weakness, who first pointed us to heights of which we had not dreamt? Descartes, like the thinkers of every time, has had to bear the desertion of disciples, who suddenly discovered that there were gaps in a lore that seemed to them quite circular. He has had to endure the worse calamity, to which he so well alludes in this treatise *On Method*, of disciples who would make his method all-sufficient, and therefore refused to follow it, or to learn anything for themselves by means of it. But he is not answerable for one or the other of these, except so far as any haste or extravagance in his own assumptions, any departure from his own maxims, any ambition of founding a school, mingled with his genuine zeal in the pursuit of truth, and turned it aside. To what extent he is chargeable with these faults we need not seek to ascertain by our sagacity. The trials to which his doctrines were submitted will bring out their strength and their feebleness. The best help we can give the reader will be, probably, to fix his mind on what seems to us the central characteristic of Descartes, that which distinguishes him from the thinkers who had preceded him or who surrounded him.

The ground of our gratitude.

The errors of Disciples.

114. No art is required to detect this characteristic: it lies upon the surface of the book we have been reading. The fear is that it should be overlooked for its obviousness, and that we should go in search of some one that is more remote. *I am because I think*, is no hard formula, no dry proposition. We cannot substitute for it, "Man is because he thinks." Losing the personality of the statement, you lose it altogether. Descartes has no dream of getting at Man except by an observation of himself. His whole object is to find out what *he* is doing, what *he* is. And he gets just so far as this, that he is a thinker. No doubt he finds by and bye a complex word for that laboratory in which the process of thinking goes on. He calls it the soul, as his fathers called it before him. But this soul acquires for him a more definite, exclusive signification than it ever had before. It never means with him any mere quickening principle of the body. It never can be confounded, as it may in other writers, with the animal life. It is opposed to the animal life. It is the name of the thinker, as opposed to the non-thinker. It can never long remain separate from the *I*. All its abstract, general nature soon melts into that. We gain very little, therefore, by arguments to prove that there is tautology in the great Cartesian maxim. Of course there is. It is inevitable that there should be. What Descartes says is, "I look for the ground of propositions; here I strike my foot

Central conviction of Descartes.

The soul.

The I.

against it. If I try to put it into the form of a proposition, it comes out in this shape. I cannot help its shape. If you logicians do not like it, see you to that. Perhaps, if you ask yourselves why you do not like it, the question may do you much good. It may make you less satisfied with your logic as a solution of the problems of the universe; it may lead you to ask whether there is not something which must solve the problem of logic itself? May we not owe something to the man who put the reasoners and disputers of the world upon this scent—who, at the price of incurring their laughter, was able to claim for every human being something which was beyond their ken.

The Logicians.

Descartes an Inductive Philosopher.

115. Descartes, the contemporary of Bacon, was, it seems to us, pursuing a strictly Baconian course in this investigation of his—was applying the Baconian method to the very subject which Bacon was inclined to disregard. He was not drawing deductions from certain premises by the aid of logical forms. He was seeking in facts for the law that lies at the foundation of them. It would be a misuse of words to say that he was *unconsciously* adopting this method. All the processes of his mind were singularly distinct. He was perfectly aware of each, and of its connection with that which followed and preceded it. But in *this* sense he did not fully recognize the line in which he was walking. The habits and maxims of deductive reasoning were so wrought into his mind by early education and discipline, that, in his efforts to strike into another path, he took them for granted, and applied them where they must be inapplicable. When he spoke of his demonstration of the Being of a God he meant to denote what he found lying beneath his thinking self—what it must confess if it confesses itself. But his opponents—and he himself almost as much as they—discovered in the word "demonstration" quite another meaning. The four rules which he had substituted for the ordinary dialectics were not so complete and self-sufficing that they could be forgotten. All his attempts to show why geometrical truths seem to be more evident than others—though they are not really more evident—could not shake the habitual conviction that books of geometry furnished the model of proof: so that, unawares, he found himself called upon to make his own method square with that which was altogether unlike it, and had quite different functions. Induction and Deduction, the search for principles and the inferences to be drawn from those principles when they were established, became blended in his statements. And the lucidity of those statements, with the evidence which that lucidity brought both to his reader's mind and to his own, made the perplexity greater and more hopeless.

Confusion of induction with deduction.

How it arose.

Errors of Descartes exposed by himself.

116. If this be so, Descartes may be scarcely a less pregnant thinker in the department of metaphysical inquiry than Bacon is in the department of physical inquiry. And yet, as all Bacon's opinions respecting physics have been sifted, and numbers of them subverted by the application of his own method, the like result may have happened and have been inevitable in respect of many, if not all of the Cartesian dogmas. The course of inquiry which Descartes instituted may have been the very one which has done most to damage his reputation. Students may have made just the use of him which he would have wished, and so may have discovered his weakness. There are few distinctions, it seems to us, which bear clearer evidence of genuine mental effort, of serious conviction, than the one he has elaborated so carefully between the Imagination which follows the senses and the Understanding which rebels against the senses, and sets their verdict aside. If there had not been the profoundest truth involved in that distinction—if it had not been especially needed for that time—the Newtonian doctrine could never have asserted itself, nor have triumphed over that doctrine which was so legitimate a deduction from sensible evidence. But without disputing at present whether he was using a correct nomenclature when he described the Imagination as a faculty which follows the guidance of the Sense, we must notice a difficulty in which he involved himself by taking the Understanding to be the faculty which has the opposite starting-point. He does not say that the Understanding is not what nearly all take it to be—the faculty which draws inferences from certain given premises. Seeing that the premises are not supplied by the senses, whence are they to come? He had no choice but to assume certain primary notions of the Understanding as the ground of its activity. In many cases, at least, these notions took the form of propositions—that is to say, words and names were involved in them. Surely a man with but a thousandth part of the metaphysical acuteness of Descartes might be able to detect the fallacy of this paradox, and to make it an excuse for arguing that all his foundations were hypothetical—that he was creating a moral as well as a physical world out of nothing, for merely the pleasure of showing how much better he could dispose of it than its actual Maker had done.

The Imagination and the Understanding.

Necessary assumption.

Dedication to the Doctors of the Sorbonne *Œuvres*, tom. xi. p. 215, first published in Latin, 1641.

117. In a dedication to the Doctors of the sacred faculty of theology in Paris, which Descartes prefixed to his *Meditations*, he expresses his sense of the all-importance of those two questions respecting the Soul and God, which are involved in his primary maxims. He proceeds to claim it as a duty and privilege of philosophy that it should establish by natural Reason, for the satisfaction of infidels, those principles which

Appeal to the Scriptures.

the faithful might accept without any arguments. He contends, from the words of St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans, as well as from a passage in the Wisdom of Solomon (which the Parisian doctors would be bound to recognize as of almost equal authority), that the knowledge one may have of these things is much clearer than that which one can have of many created things; in fact, that it is so clear that there is guilt in not possessing it. He quotes a decree of the Council of Lateran, held under Leo X., expressly enjoining Christian philosophers to answer the arguments of those who denied the immortality of the soul. Strengthened by these authorities, he conceives that it is his vocation and obligation as a philosopher to produce his demonstrations. He does not affirm them to be new. They are too much implied in the very nature of things to be new. But he thinks his method has enabled him to bring out the nature and essence of many previous arguments. Nay, he is bound to declare, at all risk of being counted presumptuous, that he does not think there is any other method which would lead to arguments equally good. Nevertheless, he does not anticipate immediate or popular acceptance for his reasonings. They demand considerable effort of attention; they are linked together in close sequence. Yet they have not the same advantage as geometrical propositions, which require the like attention. Every one assumes those to be certain. Every one assumes philosophical propositions to be problematical. It is the amusement of most who aspire to the name of philosophers to disprove popular beliefs, rather than to establish them. On these grounds Descartes is anxious to fortify his own judgment with that of the Sorbonne. He is bold enough to think that if he can carry them with him, all the learned, and even the wits, will follow in their wake; that the atheists will be glad to accept conclusions which they perceive intelligent people to be adopting; and that at last none will be left who doubt the existence of God or the distinction between the soul and the body.

And to a Council of the Church.

Worth of the demonstrations for Christian uses.

Patronage of the Doctors

Signs of distrust in Descartes.

118. There is almost a childlike simplicity about these expectations, which we could admire more heartily and absolutely if the attempt to enlist the Sorbonne on his side did not indicate a weakness in the philosopher's trust—an uncertainty whether, after all, the truth, strong as it was, would not be the better for a few earthly props. It was a mild and natural kind of cowardice, to which most of us are prone. Nay, perhaps it was not cowardice after all, but a recognition of a necessary union between philosophy and theology, which makes either incomplete without the other. The whole dedication, however, brings out into strong light that which we have pre-

Weakness of his position.

sumed to notice as the confusion in the mind of Descartes. The inductive student should not have told the Sorbonne that he was provided with a new and specially sharp weapon for striking down their adversaries. He might, perhaps, have told the doctors with great truth that, if *they* entered into his thoughts and followed his method, *they* would gain a much firmer hold of positions which they were taking for granted, nay, often fearing to expose to the air lest they should crumble. He might have done *them* much good by leading them to feel after the foundations of the belief to which they were demanding general assent. But he was either dangerously flattering them with the promise of a more easy and lounging security, or provoking their hostility by boasting that he could do what they could not do, when he thus appeared half as their champion, half as a petitioner for their help. Like the Normans in a former day, kneeling before the Pope whom they had first taken captive—owning his sovereignty, but demanding provinces at his hand—he was assuming a position which it would be very hard for him to maintain with strict honour to himself, or without insisting upon sacrifices from his allies which they could not accord.

His demonstrations misapplied as weapons of controversy.

119. The immense worth which Descartes attaches to the soul would seem to be a point of affinity between him and the Doctors of the Sorbonne. Perhaps it was actually that which most interfered with an understanding between them. The most spiritual theologians would be revolted by the solitary exclusiveness of his idea. They would complain that the man was trying to contemplate himself in his highest nature apart from his relation to the Divine. And though a God is assumed by Descartes as implied in the very existence of a soul, this necessity would seem to them very different from that manifestation of God to the heart and spirit which the Apostle spoke of. The more formal and professional doctors, who constituted, we may imagine, the majority of the theological faculty in Paris, as in most other places, would have other grounds for complaining of a soul which was identified with a mere thinking essence. They would find it difficult to make their customary nomenclature harmonize with the philosophical nomenclature, and however glad of new arguments with which to confound infidels, would have some ground for fearing that the thing proved was not exactly that which they asserted. With regard to the other demonstration, the temptation of theologians then, and for some time after, was to represent Atheism as a monstrous, nearly impossible, state of mind, and to use all their skill in the defence of the superstructure which is raised upon an assumed theism. The farther we advance, perhaps, the more

Unacknowledged differences with the Doctors respecting the Soul.

Spiritual objections.

Formal objections.

Objections to the demonstration of the Being of God.

we shall discover what excuses there were for this opinion, what fearful confutations of it. Descartes had an insight into difficulties,—a foresight of a time when they would be tremendously felt,—which was wanting to most of the doctors. They, in their turn, may have had an insight, though not a clear one, into difficulties which would beset his method of reasoning, a foresight, though not a very satisfactory one, of a time when other light should be demanded than that which his demonstrations could supply.

Descartes answering objections.

120. In his preface to the *Meditations*, Descartes speaks of two objections which were, in his judgment, the most important that had been raised against his Method. The first had reference to that exclusive conception of the soul as the thinking faculty to which we have just alluded. He disposes of it as

The Soul.

we might expect, by saying that he is not treating of the soul absolutely, but according to the order of his own thoughts. This is the defence which we have already ventured to put forward for him. An experimental process may be very interesting and valuable, though it is not an exhaustive one. It only becomes dangerous when it is assumed to be exhaustive, when it is taken to prohibit all further examination. The other objection is far more serious. It is full for us of retrospective interest, as it affects all the questions which separated Plato and Aristotle in the old world, and as it touches nearly

Ideas.

upon the Realism and Nominalism of the Middle Ages. It is full of prospective interest, as it introduces the subject upon which Locke was soon to establish his anti-Cartesian dogmatism, and which was to be involved in all the controversies of the eighteenth and of the nineteenth centuries.

Treatment of Ideas by Descartes.

121. This objection relates to the use of the word *Idea*. Descartes states it in these terms. "I am told that it does not follow from the fact of my having in myself the idea of a thing more perfect than I am, that this idea is more perfect than myself, and far less that that which is represented by this idea,

His Apology.

actually exists. I answer," he continues, "that there is an equivoque in this word idea. Either it may be taken materially for an operation of my understanding, in which sense it cannot be said to be more perfect than I am; or it may be taken objectively for the thing which is represented by this operation, which, although it be not assumed to exist out of my understanding, may nevertheless be more perfect than I am by reason of its essence. In the course of this treatise I shall cause it to be seen more fully how it does follow from the simple fact of my having the idea of a thing more perfect than myself, that that thing truly exists." The third meditation of Descartes is the attempt to fulfil this promise. Its title is

Objections of M. Caterus.

Objections. tome i., p. 354, published in Latin with the *Meditations.*

Ideas nothing in themselves—search for a Cause of the Idea

The Idea in what sense "Nothing."

Self-existence, ambiguity in the expression.

Of God; that He exists. The reader is acquainted already with the course of the reasoning; we shall not lead him through the steps of it again. How the statements in it affected ingenious opponents who contemplated it from the scholastic side, we learn from a letter of M. Caterus, a theologian of the Low Countries. He feels or affects much respect for the philosopher, calls him a man of great intellect and corresponding modesty, and then proceeds in the usual manner of disputants to prove that he has established nothing. "Tell me," he asks, "what is the cause of an Idea, or rather what is an Idea itself? You talk of the thing thought being objectively in the understanding. What is it to be objectively in the understanding? The object, if I do not mistake, bounds the act of the understanding, which does not add anything real to it. That I am seen does not make any difference in what I am. That an object is thought of does not make any difference in what it is. This idea of mine is in fact only that which gives a name to the thing to which it is referred. It is nothing in itself. Why need I be at the trouble of inquiring into the cause of it?" "Nevertheless, this great genius tells me that because an Idea contains such and such an objective reality, or this objective reality rather than another, it must undoubtedly have some cause. Not at all, say I. So far from demanding an actual cause, it cannot even be said to be capable of a cause. Whereas you insist upon my assuming one which is infinite." Two ambiguities strike Dr. Caterus as involved in the language of Descartes on this subject. He had admitted that the idea in the understanding does not exist in the same sense as the object without the understanding; still he had said it is not *nothing;* it is not derived from *nothingness.* You are playing with that word *nothing,* answers his opponent. I do not say that the idea is a falsehood; it refers to a real thing. But I say that in itself, apart from that thing, it is nothing; utterly non-existent, and therefore causeless. The second objection has reference to the proof that God exists *in and by Himself.* *First,* says Caterus, Your demonstration is only the old one of Aristotle and Aquinas, from a series of imperfect causes up to an efficient cause; only these doctors were wise enough to leave ideas out of the question, and to deal with things. *Secondly,* You are using the words *in and by Himself* in a double sense. They may signify only that such a being exists in Himself, and not in another; or they may signify that He is the cause of His own existence. Every finite thing exists in itself in the one sense, which is the only sense that is established by the argument. Where then does the evidence of an infinite Being come in?

Reponse, p. 369.

Clever fencing.

Negatives and Positives.

Difference of the argument from phenomena and from internal testimony.

122. We need not pursue this divine through all his argumentation. Specimens enough have been given of him to show that he had more than average adroitness, and that he was not ill trained for this kind of fencing. He would have been wiser, however, to have abstained from the use of those light weapons of wit and irony which his Gallican antagonist was sure to manage with far greater ease and grace. Nothing can be pleasanter than the tone in which Descartes thanks his learned teacher for his kindness in suggesting a few doubts, evidently for the sole purpose of strengthening his position, and enabling him more effectually to combat their common enemy. M. Caterus was anxious to give him an opportunity of explaining to less clear-sighted readers, that the idea of the sun in the Understanding is not the same with the sun in the heavens, but that, as the idea is there, we may most legitimately inquire how it came there. The admission that it is not a fictitious conception is all that is wanted to make such an inquiry reasonable. The supposed ambiguity in the word "Nothing" is dispelled when that point is conceded. The distinction between the negative and positive force of the expression "in itself" is important; it helps to show how the mere negative notion of a Being who is himself and not another ascends of necessity, when you seek a Being who is the ground of our souls, into the positive acknowledgment of Him as self-existent. With great skill—a skill most valuable for subsequent thinkers—Descartes points out the radical difference between the kind of argument respecting efficient causes which Aristotle and Thomas à Aquinas had deduced from physical phenomena, and the process by which he advanced, not by a series of steps, but directly from the necessity of the soul itself, to the confession of a cause or ground of it. This passage of the reply to M. Caterus ought to be read and re-read by every student of philosophy.

The position of Descartes on what side inaccessible.

How we shall find the vulnerable point.

123. "I have a right to inquire into the meaning and ground of anything that I find in me;" that is the doctrine of Descartes, which no confutations and no new theories have been able to shake. "I have a witness of God in me. I believe it is not in me because I am René Descartes, but in me because I am a Man. It is good for me, it is good for my kind, that I should know whence it comes"—this is his next conclusion, which philosophers and theologians from different motives conspired to overthrow. Whether they have succeeded, whether all their own conflicts for two centuries have not done more than his reasonings to justify him, we may discover as we advance. If we find, as it has been hinted that we may find, a hiatus in his arguments, something which is wanting to satisfy both the logic of the schools and the hearts of human beings, it is more

likely that the blank will be discovered to us in the experience of life than through the objections of divines or philosophers: though each may throw light upon the other.

M. Mersenne.

124. M. Mersenne of the Friars Minimi, endorsed, as our readers know, the speculations of our materialist countryman. We should like to give them a specimen of the way in which this kindly mediator between different schools and schemes of thought endeavoured to state the objections against the demonstrations of his friend Descartes, that he might obtain a satisfactory solution of them. But it seems more within our province to bring the two extremes of seventeenth century opinion together, and to show how Hobbes himself met those assumptions and reasonings which must have struck him as so utterly strange and incomprehensible. First, the great assertor of the testimony of the senses as the foundation of all other testimony has to encounter the doctrine of Descartes, that if there were nothing but principles derived from the senses, the phantoms in dreams would be just as real and as credible to us as anything that we see. Hobbes enters into no elaborate confutation of this opinion. He merely expresses his regret that the excellent author of so many *new* speculations should have repeated those *old* complaints of the uncertainty of the senses with which his readers must have been familiar in Plato and the Greek philosophers. What the sage of Malmesbury thought about these, what utterly odious and contemptible people they seemed to him, we know. We can, therefore, appreciate in some degree the feeling which was indicated by his extremely courteous language towards their plagiarist. Descartes replies with much modesty, that he never supposed his statements upon these subjects to be novel. If he has a remedy to suggest, he must describe the malady which it professes to cure. That this malady had been noticed and confessed by previous observers was no distress to him, but a confirmation of his own judgment, and an encouragement to persevere in his search. The next objection of Hobbes bears on the celebrated dogma concerning thought and being. It is thus that our English doctor disposes of it: "I am a thing which thinks. Very good. From that which I think, or from that of which I have an idea, awake or asleep, I conclude that I am thinking; for these two phrases, *I think* and *I am thinking*, signify the same. From the fact that I am thinking, follows that I am; because that which thinks is not a nothing. But when our author adds, that it is *a mind, a soul, an understanding, a reason*, there springs up a doubt. For it does not seem to me a fair deduction to say, *I am thinking, therefore I am a thought*, or even, *I am intelligent, therefore I am an intelligence.* For by the same rule

Hobbes and Descartes in conflict.

Descartes charged with borrowing the old Greek complaints against the senses.

His defence.

Reductio ad absurdum of the grand proposition concerning the soul.

Thought interminable unless it has a material basis.

I might say, *I am walking, therefore I am a walk.*" This is the great point of the argument. He goes on to ask: "If you deduce existence from thought, whence do you derive thought? We have got no further than this, that we cannot conceive any act without its subject; thought without a thing which thinks, knowledge without a thing which knows, walking without a thing which walks. The presumption," he adds, "in reference to this subject. is, that it is not incorporeal, but corporeal. The author himself seems to have admitted that all acts are understood under a corporeal or material principle. For he has said that wax, though its colour, its hardness, its form, all its other accidents, are changed, still is always conceived to be the same thing—that is to say, the same matter subject to all these changes. If you do not assume," he says, "such a corporeal subject, you may go on for ever making a thought the subject of a thought. There will be an everlasting question, how you know that you know that you know that you know?"

Value of these objections.

The counsel for the defence.

Descartes more in sympathy with the common sense of men than Hobbes.

125. There is much more in these observations than the superficial cleverness which will be apparent to all readers. They contain as complete a resumé as can be given of the objections from the materialist side (which English philosophers differing very widely from Hobbes have made their side), against the Cartesian apophthegm. Its propounder is, as usual, very distinct and very calm in his reply. The words *Soul*, *Mind*, *Understanding*, *Reason*, in his nomenclature—the two first, at all events, in the common nomenclature—always point to certain subjects endued with the faculty of thinking, not merely to the faculty itself. He is not aware that the word "*Walk*" ever points to anything endued with the faculty of walking. To persons in general it certainly does not suggest anything but a mere act or exercise. He hints that the words Subject, Body, Matter, which Hobbes employs, are less definite, and beg the question far more than those to which he has resorted. He observes that he has not *assumed* the subject of thought to be incorporeal. He has devoted a whole meditation to the proof that it is. The language of mankind has assigned certain acts to *bodies:* Size, Form, Motion, we are wont to predicate of them. All these have a certain homogeneity; they all presume space. That language gives to certain acts the name *intellectual:* however these may differ they all presume thought or perception. The substance in which these reside we may call Mind, Soul, what we please, provided we do not, through carelessness, or for the sake of a theory, confound things generically different. The reader will perceive that the conflict, though it involves very serious questions, is in part between two men, each of whom piqued himself—neither without good

reason—upon especial clearness in expression. The same rivalry appears in the next objection, which concerns the possible separation of *me* from *my thought*. Hobbes insinuates that Descartes is falling back into the scholastic philosophy, which they both abhor, and may soon come to speak of the Understanding understanding, the Will willing, and (to modify his former illustration, which he cannot readily part with) at least of the faculty of Walking walking. Descartes cannot quite see where is the scholasticism of saying that the different modes of thinking which are in him have not an existence outside of him; he should rather have supposed he might have been open to some of the charges usually brought against the most offensive class of schoolmen if he had not taken that ground.

Charges of scholastical tendencies urged and retorted.

The fundamental controversy

126. The radical, ultimate difference between these remarkable representatives of opposite habits of mind comes out, as we might expect, in the discussion respecting the idea of GOD. The reader will save himself much trouble and perplexity in the study of the celebrated controversy between Locke and Stillingfleet, if he will devote a short time to the three or four pages in which two men, who certainly understood themselves as clearly as those combatants, and wrote with far less polemical asperity than either, set forth the grounds of their respective opinions. . "When I think," says Hobbes, "of a man, I represent to myself an idea or an image made up of colour and of form, about which I may question whether it has the resemblance of a man or has not. It is the same when I think of the heaven. When I think of a chimera, I represent to myself an idea or an image, about which I may doubt whether it is the portrait of some animal which does not exist, but which might exist, or which may have existed formerly. And when any one thinks of an angel, sometimes the image of a flame presents itself to his mind, and sometimes that of a young child with wings, of which I think I am able to say with certainty that it has not the resemblance of an angel, and, therefore, that it is not the idea of an angel. But, believing that there are invisible and immaterial creatures, we give to a thing which we believe or imagine, the name of angel; albeit, nevertheless, the idea under which I conceive an angel is composed of the ideas of visible things. It is the same with the venerable name of God; whereof we have no image or idea. Therefore we are forbidden to adore it under an image, lest it should seem to us that we conceive Him who is inconceivable. We have not, then, apparently in us any idea of God. But it is like the case of a man born blind, who having ofttimes approached the fire, and has felt the heat of it, confesses that there is something whereby he has been warmed, and being told that that is called fire, con-

Ideas taken to be mere images of phenomena.

Inference as to invisible subjects.

How the nature of God is accounted for upon the hypothesis of Hobbes.

Eternity according to Hobbes.

Given the premises, the conclusion irresistible.

Descartes claims a prescriptive right to use Ideas in another sense.

cludes that there is fire, and nevertheless knows not the figure nor the idea of it, and has not in truth any idea or image of the fire present to his mind. Even so a man perceiving that there must be some cause of his images or his ideas, and another earlier cause of this cause, and so on, is conducted at last to a supposition of some eternal cause, which, because it never began to be, cannot have any cause which precedes it. Whence it comes to pass that he concludes necessarily that there is an eternal Being; nevertheless, he has no idea which can be called the idea of this eternal Being; but he calls by the name of God that thing to which faith or his reason induces him to give that name. Instead, therefore, of attempting to prove from this hypothesis that we have in us the idea of God, the proposition that God—that is to say, a Being all-powerful, very wise, the creator of the universe—exists, M. Descartes would have done better to explain that idea of God, and from thence to draw a conclusion, not only about His existence, but also about His creation of the world." So far Hobbes. Now let us have the defence. "By the name of Idea he means that one should understand merely the images of material things pictured on the corporeal phantasy. That being assumed, it is easy enough for him to show that we cannot have any right or true idea of God or of an angel. But I have often intimated, and particularly in this very place, that I take the name of *Idea* for all that is conceived immediately by the mind; so that when I wish and when I fear, seeing that I conceive at the same time that I do wish and that I do fear, this wish and this fear are reckoned by me as *Ideas*. I have availed myself of this word because it has been already commonly received by philosophers to denote the forms of our conceptions of the divine Intellect, although we do not recognize in God any corporeal phantasy or imagination. For my own part, I knew of none that was more suitable. I think that I have sufficiently explained the idea of God for those who are willing to take it in the sense which I give to my words; but for those who determine to understand them differently than I do, I never could explain myself satisfactorily. Finally, what he adds about the creation of the world is altogether irrelevant. I prove that God exists, before I examine whether there was a world created by Him. Supposing there is a God, that is to say, a Being infinitely powerful, it follows that if there is a world, that world must have been created by him."

The inner and the outer parts of the Cartesian doctrine.

127. We cannot better part with Descartes than after making this quotation from him. What we want is to find the centre of his speculations and his belief—that which he felt to be so himself, that which his opponents felt to be so. Understanding

this, we may easily apprehend what were the excrescences of his system, the parts of it which stood farthest from himself, those of which he was the author and not the finder. These are what it is easiest to present, what will be found presented in any book which professes to photograph the eccentricities and deformities of philosophers. Having no gift or function of that kind, only hoping to discover what they have been unable to do by learning what they have actually done, what they have not taught us by confessing what they have taught us, we are quite willing to pass for very imperfect describers of the Cartesian dogmas, if we can but help our readers to apprehend the Cartesian principle. And in no way does that principle come out into clearer light than when it is brought forth by collision between two such minds as those of the Frenchman and the Englishman.

Hugo Grotius, A.D. 1583-1645.

128. Were it our business to dwell upon men of rare and various accomplishments, whose works have earned themselves a respectable place in all libraries, for whom political and religious conflicts have won an honourable immortality, it would be inexcusable to leave the country which Descartes chose for his banishment without speaking of Hugo Grotius. It would be inconsistent with the maxims of this treatise to pass him by merely because his most memorable battles were theological. The strife of the Gomarists and Arminians touches at a hundred points upon the most stirring questions of Morals and Metaphysics; it proved itself in Holland to be a strife in which statesmen were as much concerned as doctors; it mingled itself perilously, sometimes poisonously, with the young life of a great and expanding commonwealth; it deeply affected England in the most stirring period of her history. And if Grotius had not this claim upon our notice, his Treatise *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, surely introduces a subject upon which moralists cannot refuse to dwell, unless they are willing to give up politics as lying out of their sphere, unless they would disavow the claim which this eminent Dutchman put forth in their name, that the intercourse of nations should not be left to accident, to commercial cupidity, to Machiavellian policy. But Grotius, we conceive, with all his gifts and virtues, was not a generative thinker—not one of those who have changed the mind of their own time, or have seriously and permanently influenced the mind of subsequent times. In some respects he marks a theological epoch. Yet much as we may sympathize with his sufferings, cordially as we may detest his persecution, his dogmatical position, it seems to us, was feeble in itself, and prophetic of feebleness to come. He might be a witness that the canons of the synod of Dort would be as intolerable to the human con-

The Arminian controversy.

International law.

Reasons for not dwelling on the works of Grotius.

The Calvinist has a stronger position.

The laws of war and peace.

What maxims respecting them have done for mankind.

Possible good for them.

They did not restrain the greediness of Dutch commerce, or mark a course for Dutch heroes.

science as those of the council of Trent. He did not make it very clear how the Protestants of Holland were to escape from the one without falling back upon the other. Something of the same weakness, though presenting itself in a different form, must, we fear, be attributed to his experiments in political science. If they *had* been experiments,—if the difficult problems of the duties which one nation owes to another had been discussed in a Baconian spirit, for the purpose of ascertaining what those Laws are which bind voluntary agents as the Laws of Nature bind involuntary agents,—if it had been shown historically how these laws, though they may be broken by men with arms in their hands, nevertheless avenge themselves—something would have been gained by such arguments for human faith and hope, if their effect upon rulers was ever so slow. But mere maxims which define accurately and peremptorily what should be done and what should not be done, must, one would think, be rather hindrances than helps to the development of an actual moral science. Rulers have no objection to them; they are easily committed to memory; they are not soon learnt by heart. They are useful for an adverse diplomacy. It would be difficult to find an instance in which they have restrained any nation from any actual ill to which it was prompted by interest or fear. They are fetters upon the weak; not upon the strong. They sometimes induce a scrupulous and pedantical abstinence from measures that would be justified by a higher principle; they do not create a moral habit; they do not foster reverence for justice itself, and a fear of departing from it. So far as Grotius bore any testimony against the frightful tendencies to craft and dishonesty which had characterized the politicians of the sixteenth century; so far as he encouraged any to think that there is a moral code for countries as for individuals, and one which cannot be transgressed under pretexts of religion more than of state;—so far, no doubt, he was a benefactor to his time; so far the Protestant divine was doing somewhat, if it was but a little, to counteract the Jesuit system. But he wrote for a country just emerging into commercial greatness—into colonial influence. What did he effect to make its use of that greatness less rapacious or that influence less cruel? He wrote for a country which had still to undergo tremendous struggles for its independence, which was still to breed heroes who should wrestle for it. Were the dykes let loose against Louis XIV. in obedience to the law of War and Peace? Was it the formula of that law, or the example of great ancestors, the discipline of adversity, the belief in a living God, that formed William of Orange?

Jacob Böhme.

129. It may seem very strange and paradoxical to speak thus of a great and honoured name—of a man who possessed more

sacred and profane literature than almost any of his contemporaries—and who could give forth the results of his learning in a style of enviable facility and gracefulness, and then linger in the workshop of a German shoemaker, trained to no scholarship, ignorant of what was passing in his age, full of the strangest fantasies, almost proverbial for the uncouthness of the language in which these fantasies were expressed. And yet we believe a historian of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy, if his limits are ever so narrow, ought to find space for Jacob Böhme, the shoemaker of Gorlitz, for the reason that has just been given why he need not be detained by Hugo Grotius. His books may not hold at all honourable places in libraries; his name may be ridiculous. But he *was* a generative thinker. What he knew he knew for himself. It was not transmitted to him, but fought for. And, therefore, however small his faculty of making himself intelligible to the many, he has made himself intelligible to a few, in a sense in which Grotius, with his clearness of utterance and command of language, never made himself intelligible to any. He spoke to the hearts of those few. He made them feel that they were in the midst of a very strange world, or rather of two strange worlds, full of problems which demand a solution, and which no mere maxims or formulas can solve. That these problems should be presented in all their force and terribleness to the mind of a man without school lore, a mere peasant, puzzled the doctors. That each of these problems should seem so much more serious to him than it did to them; that he should perceive an "anguish" in nature reflecting the "anguish" in himself; that he should go to his Bible for the interpretation of this anguish—as giving a hope for the termination of it; that this Bible should present to him an entirely different aspect from that which it presented to the doctors; that they should wish first to crush him as a subverter of all their clear and satisfactory deductions, as an intruder into a province which they had an exclusive right to govern; that they then should simply treat his pretensions to any apprehensions respecting earth and heaven, which were not derived from them, as monstrous and impossible; this was altogether natural,—it can cause no reasonable person the least astonishment. That in a later time, a cultivated man like William Law, bred in the straitest sect of English theology, regarding the authority of the priesthood with the profoundest reverence, practising a severe and ascetical religion, with a command of his native tongue not inferior to that which Grotius had of the Latin tongue, and with a sense of humour to which Grotius could make no pretension, should have gone to Gorlitz for a teacher, and should have accepted the intuitions of Böhme as revela-

His claims to notice

Conscious of an anguish which the doctors had not experienced.

Their opinion of him what might be expected.

His influence over William Law much less easily explained.

tions from God, while, like Böhme himself, he received the Bible as the divinest of all guides, and did not apparently abandon any of his earlier opinions respecting the Church—may cause us greater marvel. Englishmen who could account readily enough for the respect with which Böhme has been treated by some on the most accomplished poets and some of the scientific thinkers of his own land—who might also be willing enough to recognize a connection between the shoemaker who wrote *The Aurora* and the shoemaker who founded the Society of Friends—may yet pause over this curious phenomenon.

Law and Tertullian.

A very eminent man (attached to Law's first school of thought) once attempted to explain his infatuation by the case of Tertullian. The great warrior against Hoadly had fallen, he said, into Behmenism, as the author of the *Prescriptions* had fallen into Montanism. The ingenious parallel was somewhat shaken by the suggestion that Law was the clearest of all writers, and Tertullian nearly the most confused; that Tertullian was led into his Montanism by his asceticism and his horror of all the heresies which sprung from pretensions to intuitive knowledge; that Law set at nought all his Anglican and Nonjuring theories, that he might sit at the feet of an unauthorized, unordained teacher, whose discoveries were of the very class which the African abhorred in his early years, and abhorred more in his age. May there not be a lesson in the story, which cannot be evaded by any reference to patristic precedents, by any scorn either of the German master or of the English pupil?

The satisfied thinker at bay.

May there not come a moment in the life of a divine who is most confident in the lessons which he has received from the past, most able to refute objectors, most consistent and even rigorous in the tenor of his own devotions, when the conviction is thrust mightily upon him,—"After all, if this which I have believed is true, if these lessons of the past have not deceived me, if I have any ground to stand upon against these sceptics, the beggars in the street are as good as I am. The revelation, if it be one, is to them as well as to me. Fishermen and a tentmaker were those who first announced it to the world. Is it very strange if a shoemaker has something to tell me about it which was hidden from my wisdom and prudence?"

Humiliation.

It may be a profound humiliation to accept such a discovery. But perhaps humiliation is not exactly the thing which an earnest man, trained in the lessons of the Bible, seeks most to avoid. That which lays him low, and strips him of his conceit, does not carry with it for him the certain token of an earthly or a diabolical origin. His temptation may be—it probably will be, in proportion to his previous security—to exaggerate the worth of the discovery which has burst upon him. He is certain that a whole world of mysteries in nature and in himself, which had been covered from his eyes under seemly phrases and propositions merely taken for granted, has been unfolded to him. He cannot be mistaken that he is more in sympathy with the minds of prophets and apostles when he feels himself in the midst of this world of wonders, than when he is merely repeating or defending certain notions, or going through certain prescribed services. It may soon seem to him that the person whose words have awakened him to these perceptions is such an illuminated doctor as he may trust in all difficulties, to whom he may commit himself without fear. His previous habits of acquiescence in orthodox traditions will dispose him to this new kind of acquiescence. He will rejoice that his latest guide is wanting in all that indoctrination by which he had previously set so much store. The queerness of his nomenclature, his outlandish expressions, will commend themselves to the man who finds that he has been deluded, by his very power of putting out his thoughts clearly, into a habit of substituting notions which he could embrace with his intellect, for principles upon which his intellect could repose. And thus Jacob Böhme might become an actual oracle to William Law, one whom he could consult upon all the mysteries of nature and of human existence, one from whom he could expect resolutions of all these mysteries; when in fact, what he owed to him was the capacity of perceiving that there *were* such mysteries—the belief that neither Jacob Böhme, nor any man, learned or unlearned, can be the interpreter of them—the conviction that not an Aurora, but an actual Divine Light has arisen upon all men to scatter their darkness.

The genuine root of admiration.

The idolatrous graft upon it.

Life of Böhme.

130. Jacob Böhme was born in 1575. His first years were spent in taking care of his father's cattle. He learnt to read and write at a school in Gorlitz. He became apprentice to a shoemaker; while he was at work in the shop a venerable stranger entered to buy a pair of shoes. Something in the boy appears to have struck him, he told him that though he was little he should be great; that he should be changed into another man; that he must read the Scriptures diligently, wherein he would find comfort and instruction; these he would need, for he would have much to bear. The words and the vision impressed the boy; he became careful in frequenting church, watched over his words and acts, reproved his master for bad language, was dismissed from his service. In 1594 he married, was a tender and affectionate husband, and had four sons, whom he placed out to honest trades. In 1600, as he was walking on a green near Gorlitz, there came to him, as he related afterwards, a revelation of the essences, uses, and properties of the grass and herbs of the

A discovery

field, which were discovered to him by their lineaments, figures, and signatures. The discovery gave him great delight, but he fed upon it in secret, and occupied himself with the care of his family till the year 1610, when he wrote his first book, *The Aurora.* It was not intended for publication; but a man in the town saw it, was struck with it, and copied it out.

The Pastor of Gorlitz.

It fell into the hands of Gregory Richter, the chief pastor of Gorlitz. He denounced it in the pulpit, called Böhme by many hard names in private, brought the case before the Senate of Gorlitz; Böhme replied with great meekness; the Senate were disposed to dismiss the accusation. The preacher assured them that if they did, the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, would be theirs. Not wishing to be swallowed up, they besought the shoemaker to leave the place. He was silent for seven years. Then, as he says, not from any desire to speak, but because the Spirit was strong upon him, he again delivered himself of the thoughts which were possessing him. His books became numerous.

His books.

Besides his *Aurora*, or *Dawning of the Day*, "containing the root of theology, philosophy, and astral science, from the true ground;" he wrote in 1619, *The Three Principles of the Divine Essence of the Eternal Dark, the Eternal Light, and the Temporary World.* In 1620 he wrote *The High and Deep Searching of the Threefold Life of Man, through, or according to the Three Principles*; then an *Answer to Forty Questions concerning the Soul*, a *Treatise on the Incarnation,* and *Letters on the Last Times.* In 1621, *The Signatura Rerum,* "showing the sign and signification of the several forms, figures, and shapes of things in the creation, and what the beginning, ruin, and cure of everything is." In 1622, *Essays on True Repentance, True Resignation and Regeneration;* in 1623, *On Predestination and the Election of God;* then the *Mysterium Magnum,* or an explanation of Genesis, treating of the manifestation or revelation of the Divine Word through the three principles of the Divine essence; also on the origin of the world and the creation. In 1624, *The Supra-Sensual Life of Divine Contemplation or Vision, and of Christ's Testaments, in two books, first, of Holy Baptism, secondly, of the Holy Supper of the Lord Christ.* This was the year of Böhme's death.

His last illness.

He was seized with an ague from the drinking of too much water. When the hour of his departure was at hand, he called his son Tobias, and asked him whether he heard that sweet harmonious music? He replied, No. Open, said he, the door, that you may the better hear it. And asking what o'clock it was, he told him it was two. "My time," he said, "is not yet; three hours hence is my time." Then he spoke these words, "O Thou strong God of Sabaoth, deliver me according to Thy will! Thou crucified Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, and take me into Thy kingdom!" When six in the evening came, he took leave of his wife and son, blessed them, and said, "Now I go hence into Paradise;" and bidding his son turn him, he fetched a sigh and departed. **His death.**

131. We have purposely brought the titles of Böhme's books into this record of his life, that the reader may be struck with the contrast between the audacity of the one and the childlike modesty and devoutness of the other. **The contrast** The man who undertook to unfold all the mysteries of creation was a simple and dutiful apprentice, took care of his domestic affairs, submitted to be silenced because he was only a layman, treated every one with whom he came into contact submissively and graciously, indulged in no reproaches against those who pronounced him accursed and procured his banishment. This apparent contradiction must have impressed his contemporaries. He was brought to Dresden before the Elector of Saxony, who had gathered about him six doctors of divinity, and two professors of mathematics. By the wish of his Highness, they examined Böhme carefully. The Elector was greatly pleased with the shoemaker's words, and with his manner. What is more, the judges dismissed him without rebuke. One of them, Dr. Meisner, is reported to have said, **Meisner's sentence.** "Who knows but God may have designed him for some extraordinary work? And how can we with justice pass judgment against that we understand not? For surely he seems to be a man of wonderful gifts in the Spirit, though we cannot at present, from any ground of certainty, approve or disapprove of many things he holds." We hold it wise to follow in the steps of this Saxon divine. We do not venture to pass judgment against things that we understand not. We do not know enough of what Böhme means to be capable of criticising him. In a number of his physical speculations he must, beyond all doubt, have contradicted facts which have been ascertained, and assumed explanations which are incompatible with those facts. In some of these same speculations he may have thrown out hints of which the greatest physical students of our day—humble, **Böhme's physics.** as they always are, and ready to receive light from all quarters—would be glad to avail themselves. Some of his latest theological treatises, those on the Sacraments, were republished **His theology** twenty-five or thirty years ago, by one of the severest exegetical scholars of modern Germany—a man impatient of imaginative and mystical tendencies—because they struck him as eminently practical, and as throwing great light upon the controversy then raging between the extreme Lutherans and their opponents. As moralists and metaphysicians, we might have **His morals.** much greater complaints to make of Böhme. We might urge that he had not distinguished, as it is needful for us to do,

between the natural and the spiritual world. We could not even acquit him upon the heavier charge—in our judgment perhaps the heaviest of all—that the distinction of good and evil, intensely as he felt it, appears at times to vanish in his idea of some common underground, or some final reconciliation. But we dare not condemn him on either of these pleas; we would rather convert them into warnings to ourselves. The man walking out, after a day of outward toil and anxious thought, into the fields near Gorlitz, suddenly struck with the harmonies, and yet with the contrast and tumults of Nature, as they presented themselves to him in that microcosm, may have returned home with such a sense of the fellowship between himself and the outward world, with such a sense of delight in the belief that both had the same author and ruler, as may excuse any speculative confusion between the two regions. And if, as he experienced the agonizing struggle of light and darkness, he sometimes dreamed of a twilight which could never have satisfied either his moral instinct or his aspirations for a redemption of the physical universe—if he sometimes spoke as if the harmony might result from a blending of contradictions, when he really intended a union of opposites—we may recollect how subtle this most practical distinction has often appeared to men of largest experience, finest culture, truest heart; how it has escaped them; how it has been recovered for them rather in act and suffering than in statements and professions. Nor should we forget that Germany was in an "anguish" during the years in which Böhme lived and thought, which might sometimes consciously, always unconsciously, mingle itself with the strifes of nature, and of his own spirit. Protestantism and Romanism preparing for a death struggle; the triumph of each threatening a reign of fratricidal discord; each almost as cruel as the other. To maintain faith in a divine harmony through such a time was hard enough; to find adequate expression for such a faith must have been nearly impossible. The lessons which come from the failures, both in belief and in expression, of scholars and of shoemakers, may be of unspeakable worth to us if we do not make them excuses for judging either, or for that loose tolerance which often terminates in the most presumptuous judgments. The shoemaker's philosophy may show us better than the scholar's what thoughts too deep for our sounding or their utterance lie in the hearts of all human beings. We may be taught that culture is given, not that we might stifle these thoughts, but that we may awaken them, direct them, purify them in ourselves, and in other men. Some have talked of Böhme's genius; some of his divine intuitions; some of his obscurity; some of his presumption: we could admit all the claims of his

Now Nature blended itself with his own life.

Difficulty of writing: great confusion.

The Thirty Years' War.

Use of Böhme to us.

His merits.

admirers, most of the censures of his detractors. But by *Genius* we understand the faculty of entering into the common life of men, of escaping from the limits of our narrow, selfish horizon; by *Intuition* we understand that perception of higher truths which those who accept the Bible and the creeds of the Church suppose that the Spirit of God would awaken in us all if we once suffer them to be awakened; the *Obscurity* we would refer, as others would do, to the want of a more accurate education, for which those who possess it must give account; the *presumption* we ascribe to that haste and impatience in forming conclusions—that confusion between the principles which we have found necessary to our being, as such, and the deductions from them that are drawn by our partial and narrow understandings, whereof all this history has been telling us, whereof our own consciences must bear more authentic and painful witness. And therefore we may be glad, like Böhme's son Tobias, to open the door and see whether any of the music which soothed him on his deathbed can reach us. Without adopting any of his speculations, we may be thankful if our pilgrimage is as honest and toilsome as his was, our faith of the way which has been opened into paradise as well grounded and as childlike.

Genius.

His faults.

Music.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SECOND HALF OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Retrospective

1. SELDOM has an eminent man supplied his readers with a more valuable commentary upon his works than that which is contained in the final passage of the *Leviathan*. Nor is it only valuable as a commentary. It shows how the writings of every man who is to leave a real impression upon subsequent generations must be determined by the events which are passing in his own generation. Hobbes shrunk from contact with the troubles of the Civil Wars. He had apparently little or no patriotism. He preferred Frenchmen to Englishmen. Yet those acts of the Puritans which he describes with so much exaggeration and injustice, with a fanatical bitterness against fanaticism, avowedly gave the impulse to his thoughts and words; but for these he might have been merely a student; might probably have occupied himself with the motions of other bodies rather than of human bodies. No doubt he misunderstood the character of the great rebellion. He construed Thucydides ill when he applied his wise observations respecting the aristocratical and democratical movements in Greece to the struggle of Charles I. with his parliament. Disputes about the superiority of one form of government or another had exceedingly little to do with that conflict. Nor was it, except in a very subordinate indirect sense, one between tribes or races. Reverence for laws and ancient charters, an intolerance of irregular acts, characterized those who at first resisted the incursions of prerogative. An intensely strong belief in an actual and righteous Divine government lay beneath that respect for law. It came forth both in the Scotch Covenanters and in the government of Cromwell, which put them down. But connected with this belief was one in a communication of God's Spirit to men, which produced effects that, to a man like Hobbes, and to many very unlike him, appeared more subversive of law and order than all the excesses of ancient democracies. He was not guilty of wilful injustice in describing England, at a time when elements of the greatest good were working in it, as simply given over to all wickedness. He could not think otherwise. He not only could not recognize the good which was fighting with the evil: the good was to him a part.

Effect of passing events on a recluse.

Hobbes false in his application of historical precedents.

How this mistake arose.

and the worst part, of the evil. He saw clearly and truly that his philosophy was the antagonist one to that faith which was animating the Puritan hosts, and had won them their victory. The question, whether there was a real government of God over the land, or whether His government was delegated to and absorbed in earthly rulers,—whether the belief in a God was a mere belief in an ultimate cause to the wise man, and in an object of terror to the people generally, or in one in whom both the sage and the beggar might trust as a King and Deliverer,—this was indeed the question of the time; one not to be settled by Puritan dogmatism or by Puritan extravagance, but certainly as little to be settled by the dogmatism and peremptory propositions of Hobbes.

The real controversy.

His supposed preference for Cromwell.

2. Hobbes, we have seen, invoked the support of English churchmen for his maxims. Only upon those maxims, he said, could they defend the legitimate monarchy, or their own opposition to papal and to fanatical rule. They doubted his sincerity. In his heart, they said that he preferred Cromwell to the hereditary king, and that Cromwell was secretly favouring him. They were altogether unjust. Hobbes might regard the protectorate as a step out of the state of war into which England had returned—as offering some restraint upon the ecclesiastical dictation of presbyters, and upon the inspirations of soldier-preachers; but a man who believed that he was setting up the kingdom of God upon earth must have been essentially intolerable to the doctor of Malmesbury. On the other hand, there was no supporter of the old government in church and state whose doctrines could have been so utterly offensive and detestable to Cromwell as those of the *Leviathan*. He must have deemed them the outcome and consummation of all that he had been fighting against, as the last embodiment of malignancy and diabolism. The General of the Lord's hosts might find points of sympathy with George Fox, the apostle of peace. There could have been no points of sympathy at all between Cromwell and Hobbes. Each may have tolerated the other for certain reasons and for a certain time; but the more they understood one another the more rapidly will that toleration have passed into the bitterest hostility.

No ground for the charge.

Influence of Hobbes over Charles.

3. It was no affected loyalty, then, which led Hobbes to frequent the court of the exiled prince. He was sure that he could teach Charles the true maxims of government, those which would enable him to resume his power when the factions of the land desired that he should resume it, and to use it effectually for keeping down those factions. The pupil may have been too quick and too lazy for severe application to the mathematical lessons of Hobbes. He will have been prompt enough in receiving some of his philosophical hints. It would be a great

mistake to suppose that they were forgotten afterwards, or had no effect upon the conduct of the restored monarch. Habitually, no doubt, inclination was his master. The smiles of the Duchess of Portsmouth, the bribes of Louis, determined his acts much more than any theories. He did a thousand things which Hobbes, like the rest of the world, would have pronounced foolish. All the witty things which he said would not have compensated them in the judgment of a man who set little store by witty sayings. Nevertheless, the disposition which Charles showed, in spite of the opposition of his advisers and of his own customary ingratitude, to recognize the merits of his old tutor, was evidence that the principles of the *Leviathan* were those to which, consciously or unconsciously, he did homage—those which he felt were least inconsistent with the claims of an absolute king, and might consist with the religion of a gentleman.

The principles of the restored Government essentially those of the *Leviathan*.

Probably it was the discovery of some affinity between the tastes of the youth and of the sage, while they were both fugitives from England, some anticipation of what might be the results of that affinity afterwards, which first alarmed the statesmen and churchmen who had identified themselves with the fortunes of the Stuarts, respecting the doctrines of Hobbes. Perhaps it was the discovery that their prophecies were not belied by the event, which made their animosity against the man who thought himself entitled to their warmest support keener and stronger after the Restoration than it had been before. The unfairness of representing Hobbes as preferring the irregular to the legitimate ruler was part of the ordinary injustice of parties. It helped the supporters of the established government to conceal from others, and in part from themselves, the amount of Hobbism which mingled in the proceedings of that government. It led them to seek for theories which should defend legitimacy, without resorting to the hypothesis of a primitive state of war, without supposing monarchical government to have emerged out of the confusions of democracy.

Hostility of royalist churchmen and statesmen to him; how explained.

The theories of paternal government.

4. Very unfortunate, we conceive, these experiments were, involving perversions of history, distortions of the Scripture narratives, inventions of facts, violations of logic, almost incredible; raising also the most contemptible political speculators into the position of rivals to men who perfectly understood themselves, if their political systems were ever so unsatisfactory. Yet such attempts were necessary to the progress of English thought, on politics, morals, and theology. Many clung to them with affectionate tenacity as to planks which might save them from absolute tyranny—from the dreams of a fifth monarchy—from the denial of all relation between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdoms of earth. It was not discreditable to the

The clergy in difficulties.

Hobbes no sufficient protection against a Popish monarch.

conscience of English churchmen, if it involved some intellectual sacrifice, that they made desperate efforts to stop their ears against the solicitations of the Malmesbury Siren. The universities did not stop their ears. Oxford might not, as he bade her, abandon her ethnic philosophy, and make the *De Cive* a substitute for the politics of Aristotle; but she sent forth decrees which showed that she quite understood the exhortation to transfer the zeal she had evinced in former days in behalf of pontifical government to the cause of the reigning monarch. The bishops and the parochial clergy would have been in general well inclined to follow this lead. But other feelings were influencing them besides the dread of a relapse into Puritanism. The avowed opinions of the heir-apparent, the suspected inclinations of the actual king, made them think oftentimes of a result at least as serious as this. Mere dependence upon royalty could not secure them from it. Must they then fall back upon the old doctrine of parliaments, that there is a law which binds even kings? If not, here is the great Leviathan with his scales of pride, with his heart as firm as a piece of the nether millstone, with the flakes of his flesh joined together so firm that they cannot be moved. What spear, or dart, or habergeon, can be found to cast at him? Let laymen and clergymen at least do their best. There must be some mode of reading the history of the past and the lessons of Scripture, which will help them. May there not be some other artificial man more manageable than this philosophical one?

A brief View and Survey of the dangerous and pernicious Errors to Church and State in Thomas Hobbes's Book entitled Leviathan, by Edward, Earl of Clarendon, 1676.

Clarendon essentially a lawyer.

5. Among the antagonists of Hobbes, one appears whose opposition to him is curious and significant. Edward Hyde had known him when they were both attendants upon Charles in France. He says that he conceived a great esteem for the character and respect for the talents of the sage. Some points of agreement, we might suppose, there were between them, besides the general one of dislike to the dominant party. The lawyer was jealous of the interference of churchmen with affairs of state. He has expressed very pointedly the lesson which experience had taught him of the confusion which their fancies introduce into practical administration. Moreover, he had no special prejudices in favour of ancient philosophers or of schoolmen. His mind had been cast in an English, not in a classical or mediæval, mould. But that mind was radically a legal mind. His love of English law had bound him to Falkland in their opposition to Charles's stretches of prerogative before the summoning of the Long Parliament. It united him to the same graceful and accomplished man in resistance to the innovations of the Long Parliament. Possibly he may have become personally attached to the king; but he, more than any cavalier, was a

loyalist rather than a royalist. In that temper of mind he returned to England. It was one which must have always made him disagreeable to the new monarch, even while for a time he was forced to accept his counsels. It was a temper of mind which must have soon made him intolerant of Hobbes, if there was a momentary friendship between them. After he had fallen from power, in his new exile. Lord Clarendon had time to take account of his enemies and the enemies of the state: Hobbes he evidently reckoned in both classes. He endorses the notion—perhaps he first gave currency to it—that Hobbes was a secret champion of Cromwell. He dedicates to the king his animadversions upon the *Leviathan*, as one of the fruits of his leisure and of his unchanged devotion to the authority which had banished him. He passes the different chapters of the book under his review, dwelling slightly, but in a sneering tone, upon those which were of a metaphysical character, insinuating doubts of the philosopher's sincerity in those which professed to justify his doctrine from Scripture, concentrating the real force of his judgment and experience upon those which lay down the principles of government.

See first part of the *View*.

Value of the treatise.

6. It is only on this subject that one can care to know the sentiments of Clarendon. The second part of his survey of the *Leviathan*, particularly his commentary on the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth chapters of it, is of great interest and importance,—*first*, because it contains the protest of a learned and practical lawyer against the theory of Hobbes, as being utterly at variance with facts, and contradictory to all the maxims of the English law and constitution; *secondly*, because it contains the germ of that theory of paternal government which was elaborated into a system by Sir Robert Filmer, and gave rise to Locke's *Essay on Government*. Clarendon's survey is therefore a link between two periods of English political speculation. It bridges over a chasm which some have found it very difficult to measure, between the Malmesbury and the Wrington doctrines.

The sovereign of Hobbes elected by the people.

7. The form in which Hobbes's doctrine presents itself as repulsive to Clarendon is precisely that which explains its adoption in modern times by those who prefer the constitution of the United States to that of England. The monarch, according to Hobbes, is *the representative of the people*. Such is Clarendon's deduction from the account which is given in the *De Cive* and in the *Leviathan* of the process by which power became lodged in the hands of a single person. He asks for any instance of such a delegation of powers by a multitude to a man as the philosopher has imagined. He disputes his right to frame an imagination which has no other ground than a theory

of human nature deduced from his personal experiences. He maintains that peace is the natural state of man, and that war is a departure from that state; that the converse proposition cannot be justified from profane history or from Scripture. He affirms that the English constitution assumes the existence of a sovereign as the ground of its order, not as the result of some previous agreement and election. He hints with as much severity as a royalist could venture to use, at the doctrines of Mainwaring and Sibthorpe, and their effect on the popularity of the monarch in whose support they were broached. Hobbes, he observes, adopts the worst part of these doctrines without their religious drapery, and without risking the punishment which the clergymen had undergone. He maintains that there is an implied contract in the sovereign to preserve laws and to take care of his people, which the preachers and the philosopher had refused to acknowledge. He says that the great protection of the monarch in the rebellion lay in the belief that his subjects were unjustly rising against him, and that therefore those who did away with the notion of justice, and rested his claims upon mere dominion, were abettors of his enemies. He denies that the English people ever had attributed, as Hobbes supposed, a divided power to king, lords, and commons. Such a notion had been begotten in the time of rebellion. The whole history of our country and its legislation was adverse to it.

Hobbes charged with plagiarism from the churchmen.

Justice the basis of sovereignty.

8. In these statements one may recognize much of Clarendon's experience and respect for history. If he had been content to rest the hereditary succession of our monarchs upon the same ground, to see in that a divine blessing, a witness for family order, and even for the permanence of the Divine rule, one might have thankfully accepted him as a guide, and have thrown aside that doctrine of Hobbes, as no less clumsy and complicated than morally offensive, which makes the will of the reigning sovereign, and his liking for a particular person the warrant for the transmission of his authority. But the partisan could not miss the opportunity of insinuating that the whole theory, being put forth in 1651, was intended to justify Cromwell in handing over his sceptre to Richard; an act of which in that year he had probably not dreamt. And the lawyer, conscious that he wanted *something* besides mere legal tradition to uphold monarchical succession, and not knowing what that *something* was, must needs forsake the plain pathway in which he could alone walk safely, the turnings and windings of which he did understand, to look out for some semi-theological defence. We use the phrase *semi-*theological advisedly. Clarendon dared not speak of a direct Divine government. He dared not admit the expression "The Lord reigneth," in the Scripture sense. If he had done so he

Clarendon's strength.

His weakness.

The descent of monarchy.

would have thought himself descending to the level of a Barebones. Yet he desired to treat Scripture in the most complimentary manner, and to make all possible use of it so far as it alluded to events at a safe distance. So he discourses with legal gravity and formality upon the monarchy which was delivered to Adam, upon the proofs that it survived the Fall, upon the descent of this monarchy to Seth, on the probability that he lived long enough to see Noah, who after the flood became the autocrat. Then after the partition at the tower of Babel "we of the western world have reason to believe ourselves of the posterity of Japheth, and that our progenitors did as well know under what government they were to live, as what portion they were to possess; and we have that blessing of Japheth, that God would enlarge him into the tents of Shem, and that Shem should be his servant, to assure and confirm us that the inundation that almost covered us of the Goths and Vandals from Scythia and other northern nations, whose original habitations we cannot to this day find, were not of the children of Shem, which we might otherwise have suspected." On these wise and reverent conceits the historian of the rebellion thought he could rest the stability of a dynasty, which its own sins had overthrown once, and which another two-handed engine was standing ready to smite again.

The answers to the Metaphysics of Hobbes.

9. Clarendon says that he left to the learned divines of his church the task of refuting those propositions of Hobbes which referred to the human will. Accomplished schoolmen undertook this task. The Irish prelate Bramhall had many gifts which qualified him for it. What he wanted was a conviction that no school arguments could settle such a controversy; that schoolmen who engaged in it must lose their tempers, through the very sense of its immense importance and of their feebleness. The metaphysics of Hobbes could not be separated from his politics. He knew that they could not. It was his great merit that he did not try or wish to separate them. He appreciated the value of a nomenclature, and the use of boundaries between different provinces of thought. But the names and the boundaries never induced him, as they do weaker men, to forget that human life is one, and that the principles which concern it cannot be divers and contradictory. The treatment of the Will by Hobbes belongs to his general science of government. It was not, as Clarendon seems to fancy, either from confusion of mind or from some crafty design upon his readers, that he introduced his doctrine of the artificial man with a description of the acts and properties and tendencies of the natural man. One part of the system is indispensable to the other. Once admit a Will in the sense in which those philosophers and divines had

They are inseparable from his Politics.

The belief in a will in the old sense of the word, fatal to the whole scheme of Hobbes.

admitted it, whom Hobbes designed to supersede, and you introduce that thought of good and evil and of a conflict between them which it was his first business to destroy; you make his conception of the artificial man an absurd conception. If you cannot trace the origin of man's acts to certain impressions upon the senses—if he does not become what he is in virtue of a series of such impressions—if there is anything characteristic of man besides the faculty of calculating consequences,—the Leviathan ceases to be, or there is something which is mightier than he is.

Theology of Hobbes and of his age.

Divine right.

Mere omnipotence.

10. And is there not something mightier? Hobbes is not an atheist; only he supposes that the Divine authority, for all practical purposes, is delegated to the ruler of the city; that there can be no appeal against him. And was it not the *tendency* of the religious royalist to think the same? Had not he learned to speak of the divine right of the monarch till he supposed there was none who could call the monarch to account? Judged he might no doubt be hereafter, but judgments *here* could be safely denounced only against those who set his authority at defiance. The Puritan had protested against this maxim. The act of the time which excited the greatest horror and indignation, was the assertion, not of a popular sovereignty, but of a Divine sovereignty which could throw down the sovereigns of the earth. But there was a side of this theology of Hobbes which touched upon the theology of the Puritan, as there was a side which touched on that of his opponents. In his eagerness to escape from the Arminian notion of human freedom, the Calvinistic doctor had spoken of a Sovereign Omnipotent Will, which simply did what it chose to do. That was the Divinity of Hobbes; only Hobbes knew that no creatures could endure the contemplation of such a Being—that they always had and always must devise means to keep Him out of sight, to persuade Him not to visit them. Aware of the consequences of these contrivances, of the superstitions which they had generated, he would simply empty the dreadful vision of all its horrors by emptying it of all its reality. Nothing *more* tyrannical than the *Leviathan* need be imagined. When he was treading down his adversary with logical or material weapons, the Calvinist did set before himself a more tyrannical object still, did impose the fear of Him upon his victims. But in his own anguish, and when struggling with mortal or spiritual enemies, he betook himself to a God of righteousness; he manfully and nobly defied every other as hell-born. The Reformation had been the Gospel of such a God as mightier than all ecclesiastical or civil rulers who had usurped His name, as mightier than the powers of darkness. Knox, while asserting Calvinism in its greatest vehemence, had

Knox and the Reformers.
Modern theories not owned by them.
Self-will and necessity.

declared it to be a wicked slander of his enemies that he worshipped a God of mere power. Righteousness, however little he could explain the method of the Divine government, was the basis of it. And he meant righteousness when he spoke of it; not a thing called justice, which is taken as a synonym for vengeance, and requires to be diluted with mercy. That notion had not altogether bewildered theology and morality in the sixteenth century; over a practical, fighting man like Knox it could have no real dominion. In the seventeenth century it was beginning to put itself forward. It mingled with the notion of naked sovereignty in some of the scholastic divinity of the Dort school. It was an escape from the simple notion of a mere self-will, or a mere necessity. But it would soon merge at last in one of those conceptions, if practical sorrows and sufferings did not force individuals, if political crises did not force nations, to seek some righteous foundation beneath both.

The seventeenth century notions respecting Adam.
Luther's view of sin.
The history of evil.
Paradise Lost.

11. Clarendon has told us that Adam received a grant of sovereignty which survived the fall, and which he transmitted to Shem, and then to the posterity of Japheth. This was that view of the position of the first man which was so greatly to affect the *politics* of the seventeenth century. There were other views of his position which affected as seriously its morals and metaphysics. In the teaching of Luther and the early Reformers, sin often seemed to occupy the first place; the gospel was a deliverance from it. But the sin of which they spoke was that of which the conscience in each man testified; to have the conscience set free was the supreme blessing. The history of the entrance of evil into the world they read in the Bible; the explanation of the effect of the first sin they received from the schools. But it was to the second Adam that their hearts turned. Luther told them that all their thoughts of God must be derived from the acts and sufferings of Christ. In *this* century the consciousness of evil was less dwelt upon; its history and derivation much more. He whom the Reformers had accepted as the revealer of the Divine nature began then to be regarded chiefly as one who undertook to repair a mischief which had befallen men. Evil, in quite another sense from Luther's sense, became the prominent fact in all considerations respecting our race. The divine constitution of man, nay, of nature, was considered to have been deranged, even subverted, by the fault of Adam. The image of God was looked for in *him*. To make this theory available, the Scripture narrative must undergo the strangest remodelling. To this remodelling the greatest minds of the time lent their aid. Naturally we think first of Milton. But we are wrong if we attribute to *Paradise Lost* any considerable influence upon the religious

thoughts and feelings of its author's contemporaries. The royalist would of course turn from it with indignation and scorn. *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, scarcely more than *The Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, had inspired the Puritans with a horror of his biblical speculations and of his faith. But though, as Wordsworth has said,

Its influence.

> "His soul was as a star and dwelt apart,"—

apart from one school of his age as much as another—he nevertheless embodied, as every man of highest genius must do, the habits and tendencies of those who surrounded him; he presents them to us in the highest form. The Puritan belief in a Divine will to which all other wills must bow; the deepest sense that that will is a righteous will: a conviction which the fiercest ecclesiastical protesters against rebellion seldom attained, that disobedience is the cause of all misery;—these principles pervaded the blind poet's spirit; these constitute the moral of his poem. But this moral is wrapped in a story which *appears* to be derived from the sacred records, and which actually has read itself into them. It might suit the men of the eighteenth century to regard the supernatural part of Milton's poem as a mere poetical machinery; but his own conscience would have been scandalized, the conscience of his true admirers is scandalized, by such an opinion. Few modern students of poetry would apply that artificial and dishonest theory to any great work whatsoever, be the religion of the writer what it may, that of the old Ionian singer, or that of the Bhagavad-gita. Milton would be accepted now, in *Paradise Lost*, as the exponent of a feeling which was at work in his own time, and which in its highest strength was working in himself. What that feeling was might have been partly guessed from the work; it has been made more intelligible to us by later discoveries. Some of its readers who had regarded it as a more than ordinarily orthodox poem were perplexed when they were told that it was produced almost at the same time with a prose work which is avowedly Arian. They were half inclined to suspect him of a double-dealing of which he was utterly incapable, and for which his circumstances offered no temptation. He had no reason for disguising any opinion, since whatever he expressed must be offensive to the ruling party, and to all parties and schools in the land. The truth ought to be stated; we are satisfied it is one which cannot be stated too distinctly. The habit of contemplating the fall of Adam as the starting point of divinity, or if not the starting-point, as only subsequent to a divine arrangement which provided a means for curing the effects of it, necessarily put him out of sympathy with the old

Its moral.

Its narrative.

Milton's Christian doctrine a commentary on his poem.

The creeds and Milton at war.

creeds of the Church, which do not allude to the fall, but which at once set forth the only-begotten Son, who was one with His Father before all worlds, as the perfect manifestation of God, and as the object of faith and trust to all men. Arianism was the natural outcome to an honest and brave mind which could look its own conclusions in the face, of this mode of contemplating the order of the world and the course of human life. By adopting that habit of thought he obliged himself oftentimes to outrage the conscience of human beings, in a way in which the creeds, taken according to their natural sense, would not have outraged it. Those divine arguments in the third book which most devout readers, most serious divines, tremble to read, while yet they cannot refuse to recognize the reverence of the writer, were inevitable, if his primary conception was a right one. Milton struggled nobly against the contradictions in which this portion of his work involved him. Those who loved him before must feel their love to him greatly increased as they see how he held fast his faith amidst all intellectual difficulties. And they may gather from him much help in their own conflict, as well as much light respecting the times that followed his. The doctrine of *Paradise Lost* respecting Adam was adopted, as if it were derived directly from Scripture, by bishops who must have dreaded the denouncer of prelacy, by the descendants of Presbyterians who had shrunk from all contact with the apologist for divorce. And the Arianism of Milton was accepted by some bishops and some descendants of Puritans as an escape from the very notions which had induced him to embrace it.

His third book; its effects upon readers.

12. But Milton was not the only, not the most exaggerated, teacher of the opinion that the image of God is to be sought for in the first man, not, as the New Testament appears to say, in the Lord from heaven. In the year 1662 South put forth a sermon which he had preached in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, and which he dedicated to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the city of London. It is entitled *Man was Created in the Image of God.* This discourse, unrivalled for its rhetoric, would seem as if it were written to expose the ignorance of that

South's sermon on man created in the image of God.

> "Shepherd who first taught the chosen seed,
> In the beginning, how the heavens and earth
> Rose out of chaos."

Moses tells us that Adam was set in a garden to till it and to dress it; that he was taught to give names to the things about him; that he felt his need of a helpmate; that he was told not to eat of a tree in the midst of a garden; that he ate of it; that God made him aware of his sin, and sent him forth to eat bread by the sweat of his brow. These beautiful and simple indications of a man opening his eyes on a new world, prepared

Contrast between the book of Genesis and the sermon.

by a gracious guide for the next stage of his education, when the transgression of the law should lead to a discovery of the mind of the Lawgiver, when the ease of the garden should be exchanged for toil, and its solitude for that multiplication of creatures which the Creator had designed, cannot satisfy South. According to him, "Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, Athens was but the rudiments of a Paradise." What later rationalist has ever gone such lengths as this orthodox divine, in changing plain narratives into mythical conceptions, in compelling inspired teachers to accept the formulas of a modern philosophy?

South's philosophy.

13. For this sermon exhibits in a very remarkable degree the philosophy, even more than the divinity, of that century. No better specimen can be found anywhere of the struggle of the scholastical and the popular tendencies which was going on in it. South occupied a position between the two, wielding the learning of the old times with incomparable facility, addressing himself to the intellect and the passions of his own time as no mob orator could do. Though emphatically an Englishman in feeling, prejudices, style—though owing his chief culture to the classical schools of England—he shows in this sermon how much the thoughts of Descartes had taken hold of him; how sure they were to influence all reflecting men of that time who were not already secured against them by the tenets of Hobbes. After dividing the two great functions of the soul into Contemplation and Practice, South goes on—"*First,* for the understanding speculative. There are some general maxims and notions in the mind of man, which are the rules of discourse and the basis of all philosophy, as that the same thing cannot at the same time be and not be—that the whole is bigger than a part—that two dimensions severally equal to a third, must also be equal to one another. Aristotle, indeed, affirms the mind to be at first a mere *rasa tabula,* and that these notions are not ingenite and imprinted by the finger of nature; but by the latter and more languid impressions of sense, being only the reports of observation, and the result of so many repeated experiments. But to this I answer two things,—1. That these notions are universal, and what is universal must needs proceed from some universal constant principle, the same in all particulars, which here can be nothing else but human nature. 2. These cannot be inferred by observation, because they are the rules by which men take their first apprehensions and observations of things, and therefore, in order of nature, must needs precede them, as the being of the rule must be before its application to the thing directed by it. From whence it follows that there were notions, not descending from us, but born with us—not our offspring, but our brethren, and as I may so say, such as we were

Division of the understanding.

The primary notions in the speculative intellect.

taught without the help of a teacher." Two or three pages on, speaking of the understanding practical, he says,—"Whence we must observe, that many who deny all connate notions in the speculative intellect, do yet admit them in this. Now of this sort are the maxims, that God is to be worshipped, that parents are to be honoured, that a man's word is to be kept, and the like; which being of universal influence as to the regulation of the behaviour and converse of mankind, are the ground of all virtue and civility, and the foundation of all religion." So far the philosopher. Now for the divine. "It was Adam's happiness, in the state of innocence, to have these (the speculative notions) clear and unsullied. He came into the world a philosopher, which sufficiently appeared by his writing the nature of things upon their names; he could view essences in themselves, and read forms without the comment of their respective properties; he could see consequents yet dormant in their principles, and effects yet unborn in the womb of their causes; his understanding could almost pierce into future contingents; his conjectures improving even to prophecy or the certainties of prediction; till his fall he was ignorant only of sin, or at least it rested in the notion without the smart of the experiment." So with respect to the practical notions. "It was the privilege of Adam innocent to have these also firm and untainted; to carry his monitor in his bosom, his law in his heart, and to have such a conscience as might be its own casuist. And certainly those actions must needs be regular, where there is an identity between the Rule and the Faculty. His own mind taught him a due dependence upon God, and chalked out to him the just proportion and measures of behaviour to his fellow-creatures. He had no Catechism but the Creation, needed no study but Reflection; read no book but the volume of the world, and that, too, not for Rules to work by, but for Objects to work upon. Reason was his Tutor, and first Principles his *Magna Moralia*."

And the practical.

Adam the perfect philosopher.

The conscience in Adam.

How South and Descartes differ about these primary notions.

14. The rare eloquence of these passages would be no sufficient excuse for quoting them in a sketch like this. But they illustrate very curiously the action and reaction of the philosophy and divinity of the seventeenth century upon each other. Descartes had arrived at his convictions respecting the primary notions which underlie all speculative conclusions and all moral practice, by self-examination. He had been driven to these in his efforts to escape from the uncertain dogmas and endless disputes of the schools. Then the existence of these notions presented itself to him as an invincible argument against atheists, and against those who deny the immortality of the soul. South recognizes the force of the philosopher's evidence; he is glad to be supported by his arguments. But

Man present and past.

one as much as the other must be made to square with his theory of the fall. The notions are no doubt in us, but not fully—not so that we can turn them to much account; only they *were* in Adam. An imaginary man is constructed to be the recipient of those principles on behalf of which Descartes appealed to the experience of the actual man. If we could get at them they would be triumphant refutations of all unbelief, but the single person who possessed them adequately—that is to say, who possessed them at all—was the person who wanted no such refutations. What was to befall a philosophy which stood on such ground as this, when it came into collision with the practical habits of the English mind? Perhaps it might be found hereafter that these practical habits would equally protest against a Divinity which assumed a monitor in his own bosom for Adam, and virtually denied such a monitor to his descendants; which also affirmed for him a self-sufficiency and dependence on his own mind, such as in his descendants would be, if the Bible speaks truly, hateful and atheistical.

The preachers of the seventeenth century.

The preachers honest men.

Character of their lessons.

15. Though we shall see presently that the lessons which Continental philosophers derived from Descartes were very different from those of South, we must not attribute the difference exclusively to English habits and dispositions. The seventeenth century was the age of the great preachers—of Bossuet and Massillon, as well as of Taylor, and South, and Barrow. Preaching was in that age reduced to an art. The compositions of the pulpit became studies like the compositions of the theatre. The court, the city, the universities, were provided with entertainments of the one kind as well as the other. But the preachers themselves were serious men, alive to the dignity of their subject, ready to devote to it all the faculties of thought, all the stores of information, which they possessed. They were half ashamed of their own popularity, though they thought it was good that kings and nobles should admire them; though there was at least a hope that they might now and then be the better for what they heard. The sense that they were messengers from a higher Being to men, which had possessed the Reformers of the previous century, had not deserted these preachers. It mingled with their art, often raised them above the temptation to flatter those who flattered them, enabled them not seldom to speak in plain language of their vices. But the idea that they had any especial good news to declare either to courtiers, citizens, or scholars, was scarcely present to the minds of these excellent men. It rather struck them, when they considered the society around them and their own office, that all these classes were taking too comfortable a view of their present condition, and of their prospects after death, and that *their* duty was to

disturb this serenity by strong statements of the demands which the law of God made upon men, by vivid pictures of the future judgment. Also it was part of their business to expose the arguments of enthusiasts, and to maintain the doctrine and policy of their own Church, whatever that might be. The Bible, therefore, became for them rather a repository from which they deduced ingenious and powerful exhortations to do good or to avoid evil, than any distinct message to the creature, than any very full revelation of the mind of the Creator. The admiring hearer did not quite know whether he was listening to a voice proceeding from the Most High, or to the wisdom of ancient sages, or to the experiences of men who had looked, some face to face, some through small loopholes, at the events that were passing and the deeds that were doing in the world. When schismatics, or heretics, or infidels, were to be attacked, it seemed on the whole fairer that they should be confounded by human authorities, which they might admit to be valid, than by Divine sentences, which they might question. But the sayings of the philosophers, being used to serve a special purpose, could scarcely discover their real intention, or the habit of their minds. How much less, when passages in the Bible became materials for elaborate apology, could they be felt as bearing with any power upon the life of men or the interpretation of history? These remarks may explain why a man of South's transcendent talents, with so distinct a purpose of making philosophy and divinity illustrate each other, yet did little more than cause them to confuse each other. They may prepare us for the disappointment which we shall experience if we expect that either he or his contemporary preachers, though in many respects superior to any of their order who have succeeded them, should help in making the relations between the divine and human learning of which they had so rich a store, more intelligible to us.

Were they from heaven or of the earth?

Their relation to philosophy.

The Cambridge Platonists.

16. There were English divines in their time who aimed at this reconciliation in a different spirit—by a different method. Cudworth, More, Whichcote, Worthington, John Smith—those men who have been sometimes called Platonists and sometimes Latitudinarians, who are eulogized by Burnet, whose influence was chiefly exercised in Cambridge, and was felt most there—were not memorable as preachers, and never sought popular reputation of any kind. Ralph Cudworth has most of a European name, Mosheim's Latin translation of his *Intellectual System* having diffused it on the Continent, and being more accurate and intelligible than the original book. Cudworth, even with Mosheim's help, must have left the impression upon foreign scholars that our scholarship was somewhat unwieldy.

Cudworth.

The admirers of Descartes must have thought that one who was in a certain sense his English disciple, had not caught much of his lucid method. Yet to us Cudworth can never be an unimportant person. In the days of Hobbes, in the days when the notion of Hobbes respecting the Divine Being as a mere power, was creeping into the minds of divines of various schools, was finding props in Puritanism and in anti-Puritanism, he stood forth bravely and nobly as the asserter of a moral Divinity, as the witness that wherever the idea of morality is wanting, there is potential, there will be actual, atheism. That morality is eternal and immutable was the title of one of Cudworth's treatises, was the deepest belief of his heart. In the treatise to which we allude, he answers, with much skill, even with a kind of fineness which is not usual to him, the argument that the defender of a primary and original morality assumes something which is higher than the Will of God and which controls it. He enunciates the proposition that the Will of God is essentially righteous, that power is only its attribute and accident. This doctrine is Cudworth's true title to canonization among English moralists. By putting it forth ever so imperfectly, he did more to protest against the low moral practice of his time, as well as against the theories that were sustaining this practice, than the most popular preachers. Nor was it a slight addition to this honour in the member of a learned university, that he claimed the great teachers of antiquity as witnesses for this principle, and so, amidst all confusions and idolatries, as witnesses for God. He incurred the risk of having his meaning mistaken. It would of course be said—it was said—that he meant to undervalue the evidence of Revelation, that he supposed Aristotle and Plato to have found out what God himself had made known to His own people. The consciousness of his profound reverence for the Scriptures, of his firm belief in Christ as the true image of God, would have supported him under accusations which he perhaps hardly knew how to refute, so much will they have bewildered him. Even the further charge of atheism, which his whole book was written to refute, would scarcely have seemed to him more wonderful than these. In truth it was Cudworth's firm belief that God is, and that He did declare himself to the chosen people as the God of righteousness and the enemy of all immoral gods, which enabled him to hail with such satisfaction the evidences of pagan antiquity, that He had never left Himself without witness in the hearts of any human beings. He refused to deny the express assertions of David and St. Paul; *therefore* he was said to reject the authority of the Scriptures.

His great merit.

Morality implied in the belief of God.

A vindication of the old philosophers.

The imputations to which he was subject.

Henry More.

17. Cudworth divided ancient philosophers into Democritists

and anti-Democritists, Materialists and anti-Materialists, Atheists and Theists. Such an arrangement, however convenient for his purpose, can never be of much historical worth; nor does it vindicate his title to the name of Platonist, which has been bestowed on him. He honoured Plato, and his Essay *On Immutable Morality* contains an instructive commentary on the *Theætetus*. But Plato and Aristotle were both, in his judgment, theistic, and therefore they stood on a common ground. Henry More had what is usually called the Platonic temperament in far greater measure. How the soul should escape from its animal prison—where it should get the wings which of right belonged to it—into what regions those wings could carry it,—were the questions which occupied him from his youth upwards. He sought in the philosophers for answers to them. Aristotle was not likely to help him much. He found in Aristotle's master a full recognition of his desires, and at least a promise that they might be fulfilled. But we must recur to the distinction which we have so often had occasion to make before. It was not specially the disciple of Socrates with whom More sympathized. The homely investigator of facts, the patient searcher after the sense of words, did not hold out the hope of the rapid flights which he meditated. It was Plato according to Plotinus whom More, in the seventeenth century, like Ficinus in the fifteenth, inwardly reverenced. There was therefore in him, as in his Italian predecessor, a great element of superstition, a preference for the uncommon and the unknown, an inclination to dislike that which vulgar people shared in. The popular religion of the day seemed to him coarse and material. He could not enter into the political zeal of either Puritans or Royalists. His home was in another world than theirs. He found that spiritualism itself might be made the foundation of political movements and of religious sects. The Familists abroad and the Quakers at home frightened him. There was so much in their thoughts which was like his own, that he began to reconsider his position, and to ask himself whether he had not omitted some of the links that connected heaven and earth, personal aspirations with the facts of the world. He had always in his inmost conviction taken the Christian faith as the substantial fulfilment of his Platonical vision. In his *Mystery of Godliness* he undertook to give himself a more direct account than he had hitherto given of the relation between the two. No reader, we think, can consider the book a satisfactory one. The history and the mystery are not livingly associated; they blend awkwardly together. One is a supplement to the other, a sort of protection against the excesses of the other. By a hard and rude classification, clumsier even than Cudworth's classification of the old philo-

More of a Platonist han Cudworth.

But not a Platonist in Plato's sense.

Reaction in him.

Mystery of Godliness.

His unspiritual spiritualism.

sophers, heathens and Jews are thrown together as knowing nothing higher than the animal life; the Christian is opposed to both as the witness for the spiritual life. What is more perplexing and unaccountable in a man of More's tendencies, he can only explain any apprehension of divine mysteries which he finds among the heathen, by the assumption that Pythagoras somehow or other obtained hints of Jewish traditions; so that the unspiritual Hebrew becomes the necessary and inevitable medium of transmitting spiritual apprehensions to the equally unspiritual Gentile. One longs for a little more distinct acknowledgment of a Spirit of God in this highly spiritual man. Cudworth after all, with his somewhat stiff and cumbrous intellectual system, had perceptions of an actual Divine teacher, which his more refined and subtle contemporary lost amidst the visions and abstractions of his own mind. The two men were friends; but there appear to have been misunderstandings between them, for which the great diversities of their characters and even of their objects would perhaps account, if there were no outward circumstances to produce them. On the whole Cudworth had the stronger moral basis for his mind and was less bewildered by fancies; though there are hints and divinations in More which can never be discovered in Cudworth.

John Smith

18. John Smith was more of a preacher than either of his contemporaries. He addressed himself more directly to the assertion of an actual and real righteousness both in God and man, opposing the tendency which he traced in the Calvinistical divines of his day to set up an artificial righteousness, which could never satisfy the Divine Truth or man's need of truth. On this ground he must be numbered among the eminent moralists who have taken theology as the foundation of morals. But there was in him,—far more markedly in his contemporaries Whichcote and Worthington,—such a dread of the substitution of theological dogmas for moral principles, as evidently predicted the very separation between theology and morals which they most desired to avert. In this point of view the history of the Cambridge Latitudinarian School is full of instruction, and deserves more illustration than we can bestow upon it here. Most reluctantly we describe it as a school at all. We should not use that bewildering name without having first indicated the great differences, nay, the startling contrasts, which there were between the individuals who are set down as composing it. Even after having taken that precaution, we should not resort to the word except for the purpose of denoting a kind of temper which was singularly unlike the temper of the times wherein it appeared, and yet also was characteristic of those

Morals and theology united and separated by the same influence.

Character and efforts of this school.

Influence of Descartes upon these Cambridge scholars.

The Tillotsonian school.

times. One can hardly say whether these men were more opposed to Hobbes, to the Puritans, to the dogmatic Calvinist, or the dogmatic Arminian. And yet, in no country but the England of the seventeenth century could they have appeared; in no place but in a university of that England. There was in them just that mixture of historical and philosophical speculation, of the ancient dogmatism with the recent Cartesian search after a foundation that was beneath all dogmatism, which marks that crisis. Descartes had indeed affected these men most seriously for good or for evil. He led them to think so exclusively as they did of the soul, to be certain there was a divine foundation for the soul. And they also swallowed his atomic theory, if not his vortices, whole; at any rate, after a very imperfect process of digestion. But the English practical habits were too strong for anti-Democritic philosophy, for neo-Platonic mysticism, for Cartesian demonstrations. Only the moral protests of these doctors held their ground. Only the aid which they gave to the belief that common right doing is more important than opinions was remembered. They begot a race of moralizers whom we have learnt to look back upon as respectable and instructive, but unable to do any great work for the renovation of human society, for the assertion or the discovery of truth. As philosophers these Platonists were but interposing a slight and temporary impediment to the destined ascendency of Locke; were but preparing to make that ascendency for a while more complete and absolute.

Mystics.

Peter Sterry.

His character and opinions.

19. Another name, besides the two which we have mentioned, has been sometimes found for these divines. They have been described as mystics. If Henry More had stood alone he might have afforded some justification for the stigma. To the set of men among whom he is reckoned scarcely any description is less appropriate. And More had only slight pretensions to the character of an original mystic, or even of an original thinker. There was a man in his time who deserves to be remembered both as a mystic and a very profound thinker; one who had many of the qualities both of Tauler and of Böhme, and yet who belonged emphatically to his own age, and could scarcely have learnt his philosophy or his divinity if he had not been a contemporary of Cromwell, perhaps if he had not been his chaplain. Peter Sterry, the author of the *Race and Royalty of the Kingdom of God in the Soul of Man*, and of a treatise *On the Will*, is one of those men into whose writings few have looked seriously without carrying away some impressions which they would be very sorry to lose. Dwelling in the midst of the Civil War, full of all the highest aspirations after a divine kingdom which that war awakened, not surpassed by other Independents in his dislike of the monarchy and hierarchy which he supposed had shut out the

perfect monarchy and hierarchy from the vision of redeemed men, he was led to a different conception of the spiritual world and of the kingdom of darkness from that which satisfied those champions of the Commonwealth who regarded themselves as the saints of God, and all besides as His enemies. A struggle of essential light with outer darkness, of original good with evil in its first motions, sometimes overwhelmed, sometimes elevated, his spirit. The reader may be utterly lost in the wealth of Sterry's thoughts and imaginations; he will seldom have to complain of poverty or barrenness. He will always be directed to a higher guide, who can correct the errors of the imperfect guide. If he can make out no theory of the Will from his suggestions and reflections, he will at least be assured that there is a good which must triumph at last. Sterry is little read in the nineteenth century; but a better knowledge of him would often throw light upon the works of his contemporaries, and would enable us to prize them more. It might teach us how that the Puritan blacksmith, who has been as deservedly popular as Sterry has been, not unnaturally, neglected, was able to write a book of living psychology; to present so faithfully the conflicts in the Commonwealth of Mansoul; to guide actual pilgrims in their passage through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, past the Castle of Despair, to the Celestial City.

The life and death struggle.

John Bunyan.

20. That clearness of ideas which Descartes considered so great a test of truth could be but imperfectly appreciated by men like Cudworth or like More. The disciples of the school which differed most widely from theirs might prize the phrase, but in a sense exactly the opposite to that in which the Frenchman used it. In his own sense, it was sure to be best understood and appreciated in the country of his birth. Clearness of thought and expression, such a clearness as Englishmen and Germans, for different reasons, rarely attain, was scarcely less sought for by the Frenchman of the seventeenth century than of the eighteenth. Voltaire might ridicule Malebranche, and extol Locke; he might, in his philosophy, be far nearer to Locke than to Malebranche; but the man whom he despised was far more like him in some of the most enviable qualities of his style than the man whom he admired. Neatness and precision descended upon Encyclopedists. They had already been cultivated by some who stood at the greatest distance from their philosophy,—by men who were at variance with each other, by Port-Royalists and Jesuits,—but who were sharers in the peculiar dowry of the nation.

French clearness of style.

21. Malebranche is especially the Parisian disciple of Descartes. He may also be called, in a very strict sense, his most Christian

Malebranche

disciple. He was born in the French capital in 1638. He was the youngest of six children, his father and mother being both persons of distinction. He was feeble in health, and had a deformity, which was not sufficient to exclude him from orders, and which possibly increased his inclination to enter into them.

His education.

He studied philosophy in the college of La Marche, took his degrees in theology in the Sorbonne. In 1660 he entered the Oratoire. He made several experiments in different studies without much success. Ecclesiastical history he abandoned, languages had little attraction for him. The Scriptures and the writings of the fathers were his chief reading. But he seems to have derived little profit from them, till he met with one of the less important treatises of Descartes.

He begins to think.

That book took possession of his whole mind and heart: he could not let it go; yet he was sometimes obliged to abstain from reading it, such paroxysms of wonder and delight did it produce in him. He had found his path in life. He was destined to be a philosopher; but his philosophy, instead of making him indifferent to his previous studies and beliefs, gave him his first real and profound interest in them. What the *Hortensius* of Cicero was to Augustine, the *Treatise on Man* was to Malebranche. It was the instrument of making him perceive that truth is the great end of human search, that the possession of it is the highest reward.

His attraction to Descartes.

22. Malebranche may have heard at the Sorbonne that a man had arisen who had invented a new and wonderful scheme for the confutation of atheists. We do not believe that such tidings would have affected him greatly. He was in want of help for himself. He needed to be delivered from his own atheism. Till he had attained that result, the exposure of his neighbours' atheism will not have seemed very important. Descartes opened to him a new world, of which he had been almost ignorant, though he had read something about it in many books.

A man his own Columbus.

To his astonishment he discovered that it was the world in which he himself was living. The more he explored that world, the more traces he found of others who had been in it before him. Old words, which had been to him merely dead words, came to light when he connected them with what he had seen in it. He did not ask his philosophy to give him proofs of his theological opinions. It did him a much greater service, by helping him to change his opinions into convictions. He did not ask his theology to stand sponsor for his philosophy; it appeared to him just what his philosophy was asking for, that it might not be a mere hint of something which he could not reach.

The *Récherche de la Verité.*

23. Malebranche did not then attempt an artificial reconciliation of Philosophy with Divinity. It is his great merit in our eyes that he did not. Whatever hints he contributed to that

reconciliation were derived from the necessities of his own mind. They were forced upon him. He trembled himself at the sight of them. In his *Rêcherche de la Verité*, the most elaborate and systematic of his books, he discusses the question which becomes so important to us in the next century, whether the evidence for moral truths is only probable or demonstrative. He denounces, as we should expect a Cartesian to do, the notion which some disciples of Butler have been wont to accept as the starting point of their conclusions. He insists that moral truths carry their own evidence, and that their evidence is irresistible to the reason, however the senses and imagination may resist it and pervert it. Now, the deepest of these moral truths, according to Descartes, still more according to Malebranche, is the being of God and His dominion over man. And yet he speaks of the mysteries of the faith as being an *exception* to the general law which he has laid down. He seems to say that *they* do not commend themselves with a clear, decisive evidence to the spirit of man, even when it is delivered from its delusions and falsehoods. He is not consistent in that opinion: a multitude of passages might be quoted from him which set it at naught. But that he should have drawn this distinction at all—that he should have considered it a possible one—is proof enough that he did not accept Descartes as his guide from any notion that he would enable him to hold the faith of his forefathers and his country more easily and safely. That he held that faith more firmly and honestly—that he became a much deeper theologian after he became a philosopher—his *Méditations Chrêtiennes* must convince any impartial reader. What we have said of his theoretical inconsistency—such, at least, it appears to us—strengthens, not weakens this opinion. He acquired such a new insight into the reality of the mysteries of faith through Descartes that he could not risk them even for the sake of Descartes. The truth of his mind was certainly imperilled by the line which he traced or imagined between two portions of it; but we are not willing to suspect him of being a traitor to truth; we rather think that he was helping by his very perplexity to the fuller elucidation of it hereafter.

Moral evidence: certain or probable?

Inconsistency of Malebranche

Influence of Descartes upon his theology

His *Entretiens sur la Metaphysique.*

24. We have said that the *Rêcherche de la Verité* is the most systematic work of Malebranche. But we doubt if much light respecting a man is obtained from works which deserve that name. We prefer to leave that work and the *Meditations* for his *Entretiens sur la Metaphysique.* There he appears as a writer of dialogue. In that character he does not remind us much of Plato. He presents us with no variety of persons, throws little light on the thoughts and events of the time, is seldom humourous or picturesque. But he evidently chose the form of dialogue

The dramatis personæ. for philosophical, not artistic reasons. The *dramatis personæ* do not merely represent two sides of an argument. They express human feelings, actual struggles. *Ariste* is a typical Frenchman, graceful and volatile, naturally averse from deep reflection, but sated with the world and its amusements; ready to receive philosophical instructions; quick in perceiving new trains of thought; apt to relapse into his former condition; upon the whole a promising convert, such as *Théodore* (the philosopher himself) may well be proud of. *Philotime*, who joins them at one stage of their intercourse, is not a figure of any great importance. He helps to bring out some of Théodore's deep thoughts, and to check Ariste's impetuosity. The latter, though French in his habits and bearing, is a very fair specimen of the youth in any land who has taken much account of the world which is without him, and has scarcely suspected the existence of a world within him. He is startled, frightened, delighted, as the *terra incognita* opens by degrees upon him. He is affectionately grateful to Théodore, whom he recognizes as his guide into it. The philosopher's great business is to disabuse him of that notion. There is a Universal Reason, a Divine Master, who is with him, showing him his way. Till he has learned to own this master, and to distinguish his teachings from those of any other doctor, Théodore cannot trust him, and he must not trust himself. The true Guide.

Opening of the Dialogues. 25. The friends have retired into their chamber. The noise and the sights of the outward world were not favourable to their purpose. Ariste asks whether he is to close the shutters, in order to exclude all light. The answer is,—"No, my friend. The darkness strikes upon our senses as well as the light. It effaces, no doubt, the glare of colours; but it might produce some slight terror in our imaginations. I should like the curtains a little drawn. That will do. Now, let us proceed." But the next step is a somewhat serious one. "Reject, Ariste, all that has entered into your mind through the senses. Compel your imagination to hold its tongue. Let there be perfect silence within you. Forget even, if you can, that you have a body, and think only of what I am going to say to you. Attention is the one thing which I require." The first effort of attention is directed, as we might suppose, to the thinking I. What that is we do not assume; we only know that it is. But we discover soon that it cannot be a modification of the body. To attribute any exercises of thought to that is to follow the imagination, which we have discarded. So far, perhaps, the reader may go along with Théodore. But what will he say to these words? "It is much easier to demonstrate the reality of Ideas than to demonstrate the existence of this material world." . . . "To see the intelligible world, it

The preparation.

Ideas: their reality.

is enough to consult the Reason, which contains those ideas, or those intelligible, eternal, and necessary essences, which make all minds reasonable, or united to the Reason. But in order to see the material world, or rather to determine that this world exists—for this world is invisible of itself—it is necessary that God should reveal it to us; because we cannot perceive those arrangements which arise from His choice, in that Reason which is necessary." Here is the great paradox which Malebranche believed to be involved in the very idea of Metaphysics. Perhaps it had never been put into so startling a form before; for the moment was come when it was to receive a more formal and direct contradiction than it had ever received before; when these essential and eternal ideas were to be denied as they had never been denied before; when the power which a man has of knowing the sensible world, and his incapacity of knowing the spiritual world except through that, was to be affirmed as it had never been affirmed before. This principle of Malebranche was *the* one which Locke was to combat. Therefore, it is well that the reader should consider it carefully, and should wait for the explanations which the author himself gives of it.

Difficulty of recognizing the material world.

Malebranche and Locke.

26. "Suppose, Ariste, that God should destroy all the beings whom he has created, except you and me—your body and mine. Suppose, further, that God impresses upon our brain all the same traces, or, rather, that he produces in our mind all the same ideas as we find there now. Assume this, Ariste. In what world should we be dwelling? Would it not be in a world of intelligence? Now, observe, it is in this world that we are and that we live, although the body we inhabit lives in another and walks in another. *That* is the world which we contemplate—which we admire—which we feel. But the world which we look at, or which we consider when we turn our heads about on one side or another, consists of matter that is invisible in itself, and which has none of those beauties which we admire and which we feel when we look at it. For reflect. *Nothing* has no properties; therefore, if the world were destroyed it would have no beauty. Yet, upon the supposition that the world was destroyed, and that God nevertheless produced in our brain the same traces, or rather in our mind the same ideas as are produced by the presence of the objects, we should see the same beauties. Therefore the beauties which we see are not material beauties, but intellectual beauties, rendered sensible in consequence of the laws of the union of the soul and the body, seeing that the supposed annihilation of matter does not carry with it the annihilation of the beauties which we see when looking upon them." Ariste raises one or two objections. The following, and its answer, deserve all the attention we can

The intelligible world surviving the sensible.

Beauty belongs to the intelligible region.

Objections.

give them:—"I find it very hard to follow you into this country of ideas, to which you attribute a veritable reality. I do not find that I can take hold of that which has not body." . .

Are ideas dependent on our thoughts?

"And I beg to know what becomes of your ideas when we do not think of them any more. It strikes me that they return into nothingness. And if that is so, your intelligible world comes soon to an end. If when I shut my eyes I annihilate the intelligible chamber which I see now, I would not give much for the reality of that chamber. If it is sufficient for me to open my eyes in order to create an intelligible world, that world is surely not as good as the one in which our bodies dwell." Théodore replies,—"That is true, Ariste. If you give being to your ideas—if it only depends upon a wink of your eye to annihilate them—the whole thing is as poor as you say it is. But if they are eternal, unchangeable, necessary—in one word, divine —I mean the intelligible reality of which they consist—assuredly they must be much more considerable than this ineffectual, this in itself quite invisible, matter.

The Idea of the circle or square.

What! Ariste, can you believe that when you choose, for instance, to think about a circle, you give the being to the substance of which your idea is formed, and that when you choose to cease to think about it, you annihilate it? Take care. If it is you who give the being to your ideas, it must be by choosing to think about them. Then I beg to know how you can will to think of a circle, if you have not already some idea out of which to form and to complete it? Can one will anything without knowing it? Can you make something out of nothing?"

Matter creates an apparent obstruction.

Ariste answers,—"You convince me, but you do not persuade me. This earth is real. I feel it. When I strike it with my foot, it resists me. That is solid. But that my ideas have any reality independent of my thought—that they are when I do not think about them—this I cannot understand." "I grant that the earth resists your foot," is the answer.

Ideas also obstructive.

"I deny that there is no resistance in ideas. Find out two unequal diameters in a circle, or three equal diameters in an ellipse. Find the square root of 8, or the cube root of 9, or cause that it should be just not to do to another that which we would have another do to us. Here are cases of resistance to the mind as decisive as yours is of resistance to the foot. If resistance proves reality, draw your own inference. We must proceed a little further. Hear me, Ariste.

Idea of space the ground of all material things.

You have the idea of Space, of Extension—of a space without bounds. This idea is necessary, eternal, immutable, common to all minds—to men, to angels, to God himself. This idea—note it well—cannot be effaced from your mind; nor can that of Being, of the Infinite, of the Indefinite. It is always present to your mind; you cannot separate yourself from it, or keep it wholly out of view. . . . It is this vast idea which forms in us, not only the idea of the circle, and of all figures that are purely of the intelligence, but also those sensible figures that we see in looking round upon the created world. Say to yourself, *my mind* cannot comprehend or measure this vast idea; the idea transcends it infinitely. And if it transcends the mind, it can be no modification of the mind."

The finite and the Infinite.

Infinite space cannot satisfy the reason.

The Immutable and Universal Truth.

27. Here we have the starting-point of Malebranche's philosophy—that to which he recurs continually. The finite cannot grasp the Infinite; but the finite thinker is obliged to confess the Infinite—to confess the Infinite as the only ground of all his perceptions of the finite. And the finite *thinke*r cannot be satisfied with those infinite ideas which are still only the archetypes of those things which he contemplates in the world about him. He demands a ground for his own thinking self. "God must be, then," said Descartes. Malebranche spoke more definitely and piously. "You know," says Théodore, "that the Divine Word, as the Universal Reason, contains in his substance the primordial ideas of all beings created and possible. You know that all intelligences which are united to that Sovereign Reason discover in it some of those ideas, such as it pleases God to manifest to them. That comes to pass in consequence of those general laws which He has established in order to render us reasonable, and to form among us, and with Him, a kind of fellowship." And Ariste answers,—"I am thoroughly persuaded, by my reflections on what you said to me yesterday, that it is the Divine Word alone who enlightens us by those ideas which are in Him; for there are not two or more Wisdoms, two or more Universal Reasons. Truth is immutable, necessary, eternal; the same in time and in eternity; the same amongst us and amongst strangers; the same in heaven and in hell. The Eternal Word speaks to all nations the same language,—to the Chinese and the Tartars as to the French and the Spaniards; and if they are not equally enlightened, it is that they are not equally attentive; it is that they mingle the partial inspirations of their self-love with the general responses of the inner voice. Twice two make four among all peoples. All hear that voice of truth which bids us not do to others what we would not they should do to us. And those who obey not this voice feel inward reproaches which threaten them, and which punish them for their disobedience, provided they turn inwards and listen to reason."

Resistance to the voice of the Word.

28. The third dialogue between Théodore and Ariste develops the distinction between ideas and sentiments, which is necessary in order to "travel without fear in the world of intelligences." We may give Ariste's own summary of the

Sentiments and sensations no guides to the knowledge of the sensible world.

Mind and body: terms of their union.

What may be the final cause of the union.

Rewards of faith to self-restraint.

convictions to which he has been brought: "We must not judge of the objects of sense by the sentiments or sensations which affect us. Our sentiments are confused: they are only modalities of our own soul, which can in nowise enlighten us. But the ideas which Reason discovers to us are luminous; they bring their own evidence with them." The fourth conversation turns especially upon the union of the mind and the body, and the results which follow from it. A few sentences will give a hint of some of the solutions which Malebranche offers to the difficulties of his pupil upon this subject. "There is no necessary relation between the two substances whereof we are composed. The modalities of our body cannot by their own force change those of the mind. Nevertheless, the modalities of a certain part of the brain (what part I will not determine) are uniformly in connection with the modalities or sentiments of our souls; and that simply in consequence of the always efficient laws which determine the union of these two substances, or, in more direct language, in consequence of the unvarying and always effectual determinations of the Author of our being." . . . "Ask not, Ariste, why God wills to unite minds to bodies. It is an abiding fact; but one whereof the highest reasons have been hitherto at least unknown to philosophy, and of which, perhaps, religion does not apprize us. Here, however, is one which it is good that I should suggest to you. It would seem that God has wished to give us, as to His Son, a victim that we might offer up to Him. It is that He has willed to make us deserve, by a species of sacrifice and annihilation of ourselves, the possession of eternal blessings." At first such words may strike the Protestant critic as proceeding rather from Malebranche of the Oratoire, than from Malebranche the Cartesian. More reflection will lead us to abandon that opinion. The eternal blessings which are to be attained by humbling the body and offering it up are precisely those which Théodore invites Ariste to acknowledge as near him—the blessings of the spiritual world in which he is living, but which the senses and the imagination have concealed from him. That there is a deeper sense in his mind than there was in Descartes, that man is *led* into this region, that God has opened the way into it, and is removing the obstructions which prevented him from walking in that way—this may be readily admitted, and this conviction Malebranche owed no doubt to his theology. Whatever there is of mere will worship, of contempt of the body as such, and of a sense of merit grounded on that contempt, may be traced, not to his theology properly so called, but to some of its earthly and idolatrous accidents. Possibly there is as much of the porch as of the cloister even in that, at least of that which the cloister has derived from the porch rather than from St. Paul. But the passage is at all events highly instructive, and gives us great insight into the mind of the writer.

The Fall.

29. If in what follows we trace some of the tendencies which we have spoken of as characterizing the theology of the age, Protestant as well as Catholic, we must admit that Malebranche has not fallen into the extravagances of which South was the propagator. In their respective remarks as to the fall of the first man, the difference between the orator and the thinker is very conspicuous. Malebranche refers to the sin of Adam, the change in the relation of the body to the soul, the victory of the servant over the master, the predominance of sense and imagination over reason. But he does not indorse that triumph by allowing his imagination to create an Adam, and to endow him with attributes such as reason and Scripture refuse to him. Nor was it possible for Malebranche, with his deep conviction of the dependence of all creatures upon God by His eternal order, to accept the doctrine to which South's rhetoric has given currency, if he did not himself entertain it, that the unfallen man had an *independent* excellence. The French teacher would have said at once that the attempt to assert such an independence was the very act and sign of a fall. What Malebranche desired was to maintain the fact of derangement, and to reconcile it with the permanence of the divine constitution. Might he not have done so more effectually if he had accepted more literally the fact of redemption as affirming that true order of which the sin of man is the denial? Are the inconsistencies which disfigure the following beautiful passage the consequence of the principle to which he resorts for the resolution of his difficulties, or of a too timid proclamation of that principle? "God is wise. He judges rightly of all things; He estimates them in proportion as they are estimable; He loves them in proportion as they are loveable. In a word, God loves order invincibly; He follows it inviolably. . . . Now, minds are more estimable than bodies. Therefore, though He may unite minds to bodies, He cannot subject them to bodies. That a puncture in any limb should startle and make me aware of its presence, is just and orderly; that it should occupy me in spite of myself—that it should confuse all my ideas—that it should hinder me from thinking of my true good,—this is disorder. That is unworthy of the goodness and the wisdom of the Creator. My reason tells me so. Then there is a manifest contradiction between the certainty of experience and the evidence of reason. But behold the interpretation of it. It is that the mind of man has lost its excellence and dignity before God. It is that we are not such as God has made us. It is

Superiority of Malebranche to South.

The *law* of redemption how far recognized by him.

Order and disorder.

Love of God.

The divine Conqueror.

that we are born sinful and corrupt—worthy of the divine wrath—altogether unworthy of thinking of God, of loving Him, of adoring Him, of enjoying Him. He will no longer be our good, or the cause of our felicity; and if He is still the cause of our being, it is that His clemency proposes a restorer for us, by whom we shall have access to Him, society with Him, communion of true blessing with Him, according to the eternal decrees by which He has resolved to gather up all things in our divine Head, the God Man, predestinated for all ages to be the Founder, the Architect, the Vicegerent, and the Sovereign Priest of the spiritual temple, where He will dwell eternally. Thus reason scatters that terrible contradiction which has disturbed you so much. It enables us to comprehend clearly the most sublime truths. But that is because divine truth conducts us to knowledge, and by its authority changes our doubts our uncertainty and unbecoming suspicions into conviction and certainty."

Science and faith.

30. We must not be detained by the next dialogue on the use and abuse of the senses in the pursuit of knowledge, though it contains much which is well worthy of our attention. The sixth dialogue touches the question respecting the relation of science to faith, with which we have seen that Malebranche was always more or less seriously engaged, and on which his opinions were not always consistent. Here he says, "I am persuaded, Ariste, that one ought to be a good philosopher in order to enter into a thorough understanding of the verities of faith, and that the stronger one is in the true principles of metaphysics, the firmer one will be in the truths of religion." . . . "No, I will never believe that the true philosophy is opposed to the faith, and that good philosophers can have sentiments different from true Christians. For, granted that Jesus Christ, according to His divinity, speaks to the philosophers in their own secret selves, granted that He instructs Christians by the visible authority of the Church, it is impossible that He should contradict Himself, although it is very possible to *imagine* contradictions in His answers, or to take our own decisions for His answers. The truth speaks to us in divers manners; but certainly it always speaks the same thing." In pursuing the subject, Théodore makes use of an expression which startles Ariste, and will perhaps startle our readers. He speaks of our assurance of the existence of bodies being derived from the *revelation* which we have of them. "What!" exclaims the disciple, "do not we see and feel bodies? Is not the prick of a needle a sufficient assurance of its existence without a revelation?" "I consider," says Théodore, "that the pain which the prick of a needle causes us is a kind of revelation. The lan-

No real contradictions between the divine messages to man.

Revelation of material things.

guage surprises you. I use it for that very reason. For you continually forget that it is God himself who produces in your mind all those different feelings which affect it through the changes that happen to your body. Those changes take place by reason of those general laws of the union of the two natures which make up the man—laws which are nothing else than the efficacious and continual exercises of the Creator's will. The sharp point which pricks my hand does not produce the pain by the wound which it makes in the body. Neither is it the soul which produces in itself this disagreeable sensation, seeing that it is the endurer of the pain. It is assuredly a superior power. It is God Himself who, by the sensations with which He affects us, reveals to us that which is doing without us—I mean in our body and in those bodies which surround us."

The continual actings of the Divine Will.

31. We are told that our excellent countryman, Berkeley, paid a visit to Malebranche in his later years; that Malebranche received him, as he was wont to receive guests who asked him troublesome questions, with impatience; and that the interview was not nearly so edifying or satisfactory as the younger philosopher had hoped it would be. Here we may discover the cause of their misunderstanding. Ariste starts the notion that after all we have no adequate assurance of the existence of bodies. Has it not been shown that revelations made to us through our senses are not trustworthy like those made to us through our reason? Théodore answers by distinguishing between supernatural and natural revelations. Both are in themselves real and worthy of dependence. But sin, by disturbing the relation of soul to body, has made the inferences which we form respecting the body treacherous. Our impressions, so far as they rest upon mere sensible evidence, must always be suspected. The fact of the existence of bodies is not one of these impressions. That we receive upon a higher witness. We only go wrong when we convert the appearances which bodies present to us into principles for judging of them. Here, it seems to us, the Frenchman rises very much above the ordinary idealist. His scepticism is precisely that without which science would be impossible—without which the Ptolemaist must be right. It does not extend beyond this limit. The confidence of Malebranche in the revelation of eternal truths to the inner man, strengthens, not destroys, his faith in the reality of the objects which are presented to the outward eye. This, at least, we take to be his meaning.

Berkeley and Malebranche.

Supernatural and natural revelations.

Evidence of matter.

32. It is, however, but the smallest part of his meaning. The next dialogue introduces us to the principle which, more than any other, connects itself with the name of Malebranche. The union of soul with body is a fact, not an ultimate fact. Taken

Union of man with God.

by itself, it means nothing. There is another deeper union than this. The man depends upon God. The man lives only, knows himself only, in God. The steps to the elucidation of this principle are as important as the result. Ariste had used these words,—"When God creates a body, He must put it either in rest or in motion. But the moment the creation is over, the bodies dispose themselves at hazard, or according to the law of the strongest." Théodore at once demurs to the words, "*the moment the creation is over.*" What moment is that? "God wills that there should be such or such a world. His will is omnipotent; the world is made. Suppose Him to will that the world should not be; it is annihilated. For the world assuredly depends on the exercise of the Creator's will. If the world subsists, it is because God continues to will that the world should be. The preservation of the creatures is then, *on the part of God*, nothing but a continuous creation. I say on the part of God, who acts; for, on the part of the creatures, there is an apparent difference, seeing that they pass out of nothingness into being by creation, and that by conservation they continue to be. But essentially the creation never ceases, since in God conservation and creation are one and the same will, which is of necessity followed by the same effects." After disposing of the notion that we sufficiently maintain the dependence of the creatures on the Creator, if we suppose that he can annihilate them when he pleases; after a noble passage, in which he declares that nothingness never can be the ultimate object of a will, which is always loving that which is to be loved, seeing that nothing cannot be lovable; after maintaining, therefore, that the dependence of the creatures is their safety, he says,—"God wills unceasingly, invariably, without succession, without necessity, all that is to take place in the series of ages. The act of His eternal decree, though simple and unchangeable, is only necessary because it *is*. It cannot be other than it is, but only because God wills it." Into these depths our sage plunges with the courage, not of irreverence, but of faith. This will is one in which he can rest calmly. He rejoices that it is in continual operation, that he cannot at a single moment break loose from it. He follows his conclusion to its farthest consequence. General laws are the habitual expression of the Divine will. Miracles only express some more general law known to the Divine mind, though not to us, or manifest the personal will which is always working. Ariste draws out the moral results of the belief. "Then God is Himself actually in the midst of us, not as a mere observer of our good or evil actions, but as the principle of our society, the bond of our friendship, the soul—if I may say so—of the intercourse and fellowship that we have with each other.

Is creation ever finished?

Acknowledgment of the Creator's power to annihilate, not dependence.

The Everlasting Will.

General laws.

I cannot speak to you but by the efficacy of His power; I cannot touch you but by the movement which He communicates to me. . . . In truth, it is not I that breathe. I breathe in spite of myself. It is not I who speak to you. I wish to speak to you.. But suppose it depended on me to breathe—suppose I knew exactly what I shall do in order to explain myself—suppose I could form the words and force them beyond me,—how could they reach *you?* how could they strike *your* ears? how could they affect *your* brain? how could they touch *your* heart, without the efficacy of that Divine power which unites together all the portions of the universe? . . . I understand this to-day, and I will never forget all my life that things are united directly and immediately only to God. It is in the light of His wisdom that He enables us to see the magnificence of His works, the pattern on which He forms them, the unchangeable art which regulates their springs and their movements; and it is by the effectual operation of His will that He unites us to our body, and by our body to all those which are about us." Théodore adds,—"And it is by the love which He has in Himself that He inspires our zeal for what is good. . . . Assuming this, you perceive that it is of the last importance for us to endeavour to acquire some knowledge of the attributes of this Sovereign Being upon whom we depend so entirely, seeing that He must act upon us according to that which He is. His manner of acting must bear the stamp of His attributes. Not only our duties must bear a direct relation to His perfections, but our conduct must be moulded on His, that we may adopt fitting plans for the accomplishment of our designs. . . . Faith and experience teach us many truths, by the abridged method of authority and by tests of feeling, that are very delightful and very suitable to us. But all this does not give us the knowledge of these truths. That must be the fruit and the recompence of our toil and of the application of our minds. Seeing that we are made to know and love God, it is evident that there is no occupation which can be more desirable for us than the meditation of the Divine perfections, which must awaken charity and regulate all the duties of a reasonable creature." Ariste admits the justice of the conclusion; but he owns that he fears greatly to form any judgments upon the Divine perfections which are likely to be dishonourable to them. "Would it not be better to honour them in silence and in wonder, and to occupy ourselves exclusively in the search of truths less sublime and more proportioned to the capacity of our minds?" "How, Ariste," answers his friend, "do you consider what you are saying? We are formed to know and love God. Do you wish, then, that we should not think of Him, not speak of Him—I must needs then add,—

In Him we live, and move, and have our being.

Seeing all things in Him.

God an object of our knowledge.

Fear of dishonouring God.

that we should not adore Him? We must, you say, adore Him by silence and wonder. Surely: by a reverent silence which the contemplation of His grandeur imposes on us; by a religious silence, to which the brightness of His majesty reduces us; by an inevitable silence, if I may so say, which comes from our feebleness, and which has not for its root a criminal negligence, a deranged curiosity to know, instead of Him, objects less worthy of our devotion. What do you wonder at in the Divinity if you know nothing of Him? How will you love His nature if you do not contemplate it? How shall we build up each other in charity if we banish from our discourses Him whom you have acknowledged as the soul of all the intercourse that we have together as the bond of our little society? Assuredly, Ariste, the more you know the Sovereign Being, the more you will admire His infinite perfections. Fear not, then, to think too much of Him, or to speak of Him unworthily, if only faith guides you. . . . You do not dishonour the Divine perfections by judgments unworthy of them, provided you do not judge of them by yourself—provided you do not impute to the Creator the imperfections and the limitations of the creature." This is the text for the subsequent dialogues. To give a fair report of them would be a difficult task. They range from the most transcendent questions of theology to the minutest questions of natural history. With the hints we have already given, our readers will be able to find a way through them, and will be abundantly rewarded for the attempt. In the course of these dialogues, however, there occur several points which indicate the connection and relation between the thoughts of Malebranche and those of his most illustrious contemporaries. To one or two of these we will advert.

The true wonder and silence.

Knowledge implied in worship.

The subsequent dialogues.

Casuistry of the age of Louis XIV.

33. The age of Malebranche was the age in which the casuistry of the Jesuits arrived at that complication and that influence which caused the *Lettres Provinciales* to be welcomed for their wit by the salons of Paris—as witnesses for truth, by all the moralists of Europe. How closely the principle of that casuistry was associated with a doctrine of probabilities—with a notion that moral truth is excluded from the realm of certainty—must be clear to the readers of Pascal, were other evidence wanting. On that ground Malebranche might be considered a more effectual protester against the casuists than Pascal himself. For it cannot be said that the latter, though born and bred a mathematician, ever fairly brought his mathematics to bear on moral questions. Upon these he had in his early years acquired much of the Montaigne scepticism; nor was his intellect ever emancipated from that scepticism, however little it may have penetrated to his heart. On the other hand, Malebranche, starting from

Probability.

Malebranche a witness against casuistry.

Denunciation of Hobbes and his school.

the bolder and more manly scepticism of Descartes, had arrived, as we have seen, at the conviction that no principles are so certain as moral principles. In his Eighth Dialogue he affirms, even more vigorously than ever before, that the moral nature of God is the foundation of all morality in man, and that the reason of man is warned, by its very inability to measure the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, that that power, wisdom, and goodness, are the only standard and the only source of his own. He protests indignantly and passionately against the attempts of the Hobbes school to base morality upon self-interest, or upon any earthly conditions whatever. He protests with still more horror against all notions that the world is an emanation from God, and that any of its evils and corruptions can have been derived from Him. These are moral principles which must have embarrassed the theory as well as the practice of the casuists. So far as they could leaven the divinity and philosophy of the age, so far would that divinity and philosophy refuse their sanction to any schemes for evading the letter of the moral law, or for playing with its letter to the destruction of its spirit.

Pascal's Jansenism.

The Port-Royal Society.

Their practical testimony.

34. But Pascal had a support in his conflict with the Jesuits which he did not derive from the subtlety of his intellect, from his exquisite style, nor from the purity of his life. That which lay behind all his scepticism was the confession of a Divine will, which could say,—“ This is right”—“ This is wrong;” and from which all impulses to right in human beings were drawn. When Pascal came under the influence of the Port-Royal, he surrendered himself to this will. He acknowledged it as surmounting all conclusions of his own mind or of any other mind. It alone could conquer the will of man; it alone could determine what each man should think—what each man should be. The doctrine of grace, taught with much hardness and formality by Jansenius, worked out by him from the writings of Augustine, and requiring for him nothing to make its logic less austere and crushing, became something quite other than a doctrine when it was expressed in the lives of actual men and women—in the witness which they were bearing to the world. The Will was that of an actual Being, who had chosen them to do a work, and who enabled them to fulfil it. They were separated from the rest of French society—they were to testify of it that its deeds were evil; but they were also to testify by their good works of the goodness of Him who had called them. And they did testify of it by a sympathy with human wretchedness, which was such an answer to the rigidness of some of their own statements as none of their opponents could produce—such a justification of the real purpose of the Creator towards the world He had made, as no mild anti-Augustinian could have wrought out

by a thousand elaborate arguments and ingenious distinctions. And when this practical assertion of the all-governing will of God had to encounter the acute reasonings, elaborate court plots, bitter persecutions of the Jesuits, the strange paradox that these last were the defenders of human freedom, those the asserters of rigid despotical decrees, could not fail to strike with its full force a people so alive to contrasts and to ridicule as the Parisians. The logical sternness of the Augustinian theory had its attractions for the French intellect. If it was to yield at all, this was the kind of authority to which it might yield. Calvinism in the last century had been the one antagonist power to the League. If it could assume a Catholic form—if men could confess an actual government of God, without renouncing the Papal Vicariat—might it not overthrow many strongholds in this day? The court thought so; the Jesuits thought so. If there was to be a rival power to either, must it not be this? No doctrine of certainty, such as Malebranche put forth—no confession that we see all things in God, and that our idea of Justice, Goodness, Truth, is grounded on the idea of it in the Divine mind—could compete with the direct appeals which the teachers of Port-Royal made at once to the deepest wants and the most superficial tendencies of France, in the age of Louis XIV.—to the deep wants which could only be satisfied by Almighty will, coming forth to command, not to ask obedience—to the superficial tendencies which were impatient of thought and reflection, and craved simply to be told what was necessary that a soul might pass out of utter vanity and heartlessness into a fitness for heaven.

Augustinianism had an attraction for Frenchmen in both its forms.

Antoine Arnauld.

35. Pascal submitted to the discipline of Port-Royal, and became its accomplished champion. Antoine Arnauld, in right of his name, his character, his talent, his persecutions, was not the champion, but the representative of the society. Belonging to a family in which the women possessed a masculine vigour that would have enabled them to rule kingdoms, and would have been perilous in a small sphere—if it had not been tempered with so much grace and humility—he might have been allowed a certain amount of intellectual haughtiness, even if it had not been cultivated by the admiration of disciples, the cordial respect of men whose habits of life were altogether different from his own, the bitter opposition of those who were his inferiors in every gift and in every moral quality. That he was not spoiled by admiration may be ascribed to his abundant experience of enmity and hatred; that he retained so much of fairness and generosity, whilst engaged in the endless practice of controversy, is clearer evidence of the spiritual influence under which he lived. That one who combined an admirable skill in fence, with

His family and character.

His trials and gifts.

great earnestness in his convictions, and with the temptation of a logician to identify his convictions with his theories, should have been uniformly equitable or candid towards all who irritated him either by disputing his conclusions, or by suggesting conclusions which he disapproved—that he should have indulged in no impertinences towards men whom in his heart he knew to be unworthy of them—could not be expected. Let him whose conscience is free from blame cast the first stone at this eminent teacher if they detect him in such offences! Malebranche sent to Antoine Arnauld a treatise in MS., *On Nature and Grace.* He had, it appears, been on friendly terms with the Port-Royalist, though he had not courage to communicate a paper which was likely to be displeasing, except through a third party. He trembled, he says, both at Arnauld and Arnauld's reputation. Such language might at one period have sounded like cruel irony. But the sins of the Jansenist had been for a while effaced, even in the court and among ecclesiastics, by his vigorous confutation of Protestants; his works were eagerly read; to his own circle his opinions were law. A recluse, therefore—many of whose sentiments were startling, and open to the assaults of the wits—might have an unaffected dread lest the powerful logician and practised debater should take up arms against him. Arnauld apparently took little notice of his "friend's" theology, though he expressed a general dislike to it. But perceiving in the treatise *On Nature and Grace* an allusion to the *Récherche de la Verité*, he pretended to think that the arguments in the one book rested on those of the other. He applied all his faculties to the study of *that* book, and produced a treatise on *True and False Ideas*, "wherein he believes that he has demonstrated that which the author of the book on the *Search for Truth* has said of ideas is built upon false prejudices, and that nothing is more utterly groundless than his doctrine, that we see everything in God."

Not free from the vices of a controversialist.

His relations with Malebranche.

The sharp practice of eminent divines.

36. A writer who put such an announcement as this in his title page, and who proceeds (through twenty-eight chapters) to treat all his friend's arguments and conclusions as chimerical and ridiculous, could hardly be astonished if a philosopher, notoriously sensitive and as averse from controversies as Arnauld was fond of them, exhibited some pain and anger. Malebranche thought he had a plea for such feelings, not only in the answer itself, but in the craft—such it appeared to him—with which the Port-Royalist had revenged upon his doctrine of ideas the dislike which he felt, but which it was less convenient to express, for his doctrine of grace. The last would have struck the Parisian circles as more moderate, perhaps more orthodox, than Arnauld's. The belief that we see everything

Their battle.

The result.

in God might easily be made to look extravagant and preposterous; the irreligious and the religious might enjoy the exposure of it together. Under such circumstances, the philosophical priest, according to the morality usually recognized in such cases—which is not that of the Sermon on the Mount—feels himself quite justified in making reprisals. He insists upon discussing the mystery of the Divine decrees before he will enter upon the defence of his ideas. Once occupied with that subject, he can meet the imputation of folly with the imputation of heterodoxy; he can bring Arnauld—so he thinks—under the anathema of the Council of Trent. Need we tell the reader that Arnauld, in his rejoinder, expresses his astonishment that a treatise so mild and friendly as his should have provoked a retort of this kind—that he formally pronounces a dissolution of his old friendship with Malebranche—that he accuses him of the "worst possible faith," and of all the other crimes worthy of the pillory or the galleys, which good men in all ages have attributed and do attribute to each other.

The strife important, however melancholy.

37. On this, as on a multitude of occasions, our first impulse is to long that some heavenly power—

"Ἄμφω ὁμῶς θυμῷ φιλέουσά τε κηδομένη τε"—

had restrained these combatants from drawing swords, which must wound many hearts besides their own. But a wisdom higher than the goddess who interfered to stop the arm of the Greek chief may have judged it best that excellent Christian priests should be permitted to make these humiliating exposures of their own weakness. The lessons which the two writers drew from them in their hours of reflection and repentance may have been necessary for their own use. Nor could the historian of human thought have well spared them. Arnauld's treatise is an important contribution to the controversy on ideas—a controversy which had never been more serious in the schools, and had never touched human life at more points, than in the seventeenth century. Arnauld was a Cartesian. His protests, therefore, against an opinion which Malebranche regarded as necessarily involved in the principle of Descartes has a value of its own, apart from that which it owes to the logical power and argumentative dexterity of the author. This power and dexterity are fully displayed in it. There is no vulnerable point in the head or heel of the *Récherche de la Verité* which the Port-Royalist does not detect, and which he does not treat with merciless severity. It must have been anguish to Malebranche to be told that the ideas to which he fled from the phantoms of the imagination were phantoms of the imagination themselves; that he who supposed he had broken loose from

Ideas as "re-presentative existences."

The bitterness of the attack.

popular as well as scholastical prejudices was the slave of both. He would have winced less under the charge if he could have wholly repelled it, or if he had not felt that it touched convictions which he could not abandon without abandoning what was most precious and vital to him. At times he is evidently staggered by Arnauld's ridicule of the *"êtres representatifs."* He is not sure that they are quite so solid as he had taken them to be. But if he parted with them, must he not part with his faith in the Divine Word as the ground of all that was deepest in him—of all that he actually knew—of all that was not the effect of fantasy and delusion. Did Arnauld know what he was doing if he took this belief from the philosopher? He warns Malebranche—with a little more of the air of a Pharisee than quite became so wise a man, who had been exposed to like accusations—that he was deriving his theology from the reveries of his brains, rather than from the teaching of the fathers and the Church. Did he consider how much this belief helped to preserve the disciple of Descartes from being a mere *meditatif*—to connect his personal thoughts with the teaching of other ages—to make him prize the truths which the humblest Christian could know as well as the profoundest disciple of Descartes?

What was involved in it.

A blow to faith as well as philosophy.

The relation of philosophy to divinity indicated by the debate.

38. The controversy, therefore, between Arnauld and Malebranche is not merely of worth for the light which it throws on the question respecting ideas. The whole position of the theologian in reference to the philosopher is involved in it. Arnauld had a great respect for philosophy—*was* a philosopher of the newest and most advanced school. That school was so much occupied with demonstrations of God—of men's immortality—that it might seem hard to make it keep its proper distance. But the distance was clearly defined by Arnauld's belief and by Arnauld's logic. To assert the irresistible efficacious grace of the Divine will was the business of the theologian. With this region the philosopher could not intermeddle. The distinction was clear. It had a strong foundation in reason. Descartes would, perhaps, have accepted the arrangement as satisfactory. Malebranche could not. To what, he asked, does the will point? Is it not a will to goodness? Are not the effects which it produces on those upon whom it operates good? And how am I to know what goodness is? How are *men* to know? The elect know, you say, by a Divine teaching. Be it so. But does not that Divine teaching set forth a standard to which man is to be conformed—a standard from which all evil is a deflection? Where am I to find this standard? How is it related to God? How is it related to us? Malebranche could not place the standard in man. He could not separate the standard from him. The Divine Word was to him the reconciliation of

The impossibility of recognizing a mere election of individuals as a ground of morality.

The solution.

this enigma. There he found the meeting-point of the will which commands, and of the creature who is meant to know the will, and to obey it. There he found the meeting-point of philosophy and theology. Arnauld had never felt the need of this reconciliation—could see no meaning in it. The doctrine of a Divine Word was part of his confession rather than of his conviction. That for which he lived, and for which he would have died, was sufficient for him; it was his work to defend that. Good was it for France and for mankind that men like him should have been found, who could see radical truths with such exclusiveness. Good was it that they should show to after generations what questions they could not satisfy—what work they could not accomplish; how much of earthly weakness and vehemence they displayed when they tried to hinder other men from filling *their* places in the world—from doing the work to which *they* were appointed.

Fenelon and Bossuet united against Malebranche.

39. The Treatise *On Nature and Grace* was an unfortunate stumbling book in the path of our philosopher. It awakened other opponents better known to us than was Antoine Arnauld. Its history, indeed, is curious. Fenelon wrote against it, and Fenelon's objections were revised, strengthened, perhaps inspired, by Bossuet. These illustrious men had not yet become opponents. The fatal apple of disinterested love had not yet been thrown by Madame Guion between them. They were alike sharers in royal favour, both employed in the education of royal children. How they dealt with this particular theological controversy it is not necessary for our present purpose to inquire. If it behoved us to notice each modification of the doctrine respecting Nature and Grace which each accomplished thinker has adopted and defended, the moral and metaphysical student would have a hopeless task before him. Arnauld's position is a definite one, and has an historical importance. Fenelon has a worth of his own. The subject which set him at war with M. de Meaux may require some attention hereafter. But on this topic we are not to expect any special illumination from him.

Fenelon not specially interesting to the philosophical inquirer.

Bossuet's Treatise *On the Knowledge of God and Ourselves.*

40. It may be well, however, before we pass to matters of more serious interest, to consider for a moment in what relation the great Preacher of France, in the seventeenth century, stood to that Philosophy which had most of a Christian character. Bossuet was the author of a Treatise *De La Connaissance de Dieu et de Soimême.* It was written in the way of business, for the use of the Dauphin. It has therefore the kind of value which must always attach to a Manual composed by a very able man, who has studied much, who thinks clearly, and who knows how to restrain his eloquence of expression when eloquence is not

required. It has none of the value which belongs to a book of philosophy as such; that is to say, it is not a search after a Principle; it is simply a statement and recapitulation of judgments already formed. But it has had the fortune, in recent times, to win for itself a reputation with a class of men who in ordinary circumstances would have been likely to set little store by a book composed with such an aim, and under such conditions. M. Jules Simon, its latest editor, welcomes it as the work of a man who was as thoroughly rationalistic in his treatment of philosophical questions as he was an asserter of authority in theological questions. He demolishes (such is the boast of his countryman) the absurd pretensions of the Protestants to the exercise of any independent thought on the controversies which are suggested by Revelation; he vindicates the most independent thought on all controversies which lie out of that sphere. Part with an infallible judge of controversies, and you have nothing but varieties and contradictions in the divine region. But the exposer of these varieties and contradictions can consider the knowledge of ourselves, and even of God, from the human point of view, without appealing to Pope, Council, or to the Bible; even without introducing the name of Jesus Christ. In this separation of objects and methods lies the safety, in the judgment of the modern editor, both of religion and philosophy. Bossuet has shown his genius as a man, his wisdom as a Frenchman, in establishing the boundary so strictly that none upon either side needs to transgress it.

Admiration of it in the modern French School.

Bossuet the champion of Rationalism and of authority.

41. The bearing of this remark upon later times we will not now consider. Nor do we refer to it in connection with Bossuet's time, so far as it concerns his disputes with Protestants of one country or another. We speak of it only because it illustrates the startling "variation" between the ideas of two ecclesiastics of the same age and country, equally devoted to the holy see (if we do not wrong Malebranche by assuming him to be as much of a Gallican as Bossuet was)—equally disinclined to set up their own judgment against the decisions of the Church. There was no Rationalism in the philosophy of Malebranche, if Rationalism means the opinion that a revelation of God is not needed for philosophy. There was much Rationalism in the divinity of Malebranche, if Rationalism means that Divine truths are apprehended by the reason, that they can only be apprehended by the reason. That conviction did not in the least interfere with his belief, that the truths are given to the reason, that nothing has its origin in the finite creature. If Bossuet had regarded authority in this sense he would have been in strict accordance with Malebranche, practically as well as verbally. There was a wide divergence in their conclusions

Bossuet's relation to the author of the *Meditations Chrétiennes*.

Malebranche in what sense a Rationalist and an opposer of Rationalism.

—a moral even more than an intellectual divergence—because the authority which Bossuet in his heart respected was an authority which defines and imposes opinions; because the authority which Malebranche in his heart respected was an authority which unfolds principles to an organ that is created to receive them. No opposition between the most vehement Protestant and the Gallican chief could be more direct and real than this. All the difference between a mere word of command, such as issues from the lips of an Emperor or a Pope, and a word which giveth light, such as issues from a living God, is contained in it. How great that is we may learn from the Prayer which introduces Malebranche's *Meditations Chrétiennes,* and with which we shall wind up our notice of him.

Malebranche's Prayer.

42. "Oh Eternal Wisdom! I am not a light to myself; and the bodies which surround me cannot illuminate me: the superior intelligences themselves, seeing that they contain not in themselves the reason which makes them wise, cannot communicate that reason to my mind. Thou alone art the light of angels and of men; Thou alone art the universal Reason to all minds. Thou art the very Wisdom of the Father—Wisdom eternal, unchangeable, necessary, who makest wise the creatures, and even, though in a manner altogether different, the Creator. Oh Thou my true and only Master, show thyself to me! Cause me to see light in Thy light. I appeal only to Thee. I would consult none but Thee. Speak, Thou Eternal Word, the Word of the Father, that has been always uttered, that utters itself now, that will utter itself for ever. Oh speak, and so loudly that I may hear Thee through all the confused noises which my senses and my passions are continually making in my soul. But oh Jesus! I beseech Thee to speak in me only for Thy glory, and to make me know only Thy greatness, for in Thee are hidden all the treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of God. He who knoweth Thee knoweth the Father, and he who knoweth thee and the Father is perfectly blessed. Cause me, then, to know, oh Jesus, what Thou art, and how all things subsist in Thee. Penetrate my mind with the brightness of Thy glory; consume my heart with the fire of Thy love. Grant me in this work, which I compose only for Thy glory, expressions clear and true, full of life and soul—expressions worthy of Thee, and such as shall increase in me and in those who share my meditations, the knowledge of Thy greatness, the sense of Thy mercies."

The Eternal Word.

The Father and the Son.

Benedict Spinoza.

43. The transition from this prayer to the life of a man whom Malebranche called, and whom thousands have called, "an impious atheist," may seem violent. And yet we cannot think of any point of transition which is so good, or of any prepara-

tion which can be fitter for enabling the reader to think with wisdom, and with the charity that is inseparable from the divine Wisdom, of Benedict Spinoza. To heap epithets on him is the easiest of all tasks. No trouble of invention is needed; they lie ready to our hand in most of the answers which have been written to him. It would be not more difficult to quote extravagant panegyrics upon him from the writings of eminent men of our own and former days; but these would as little help to the right understanding of him as the reproaches. His evil and his good must be learnt from himself—must be exhibited, as far as may be, in his own words; then we may hope to know the secret of the influence which he has exerted and does exert; then we may learn what other influences may most effectually modify or counteract it. But in his case, as in all others—in no case more than his—some knowledge of the life of the man is essential to a knowledge of the meaning of the writer.

Charges and panegyrics may be thrown aside.

44. Benedict Spinoza was born at Amsterdam in the year 1632. He belonged, therefore, apparently, to the country which was native to Grotius, which was adopted by Descartes. Really he did not belong to that country or to any country. His parents were Portuguese Jews; his father was settled as a merchant in Holland. How many intelligent youths of his race must have felt the effects of such a position! Linked to men of many lands and various faiths by outward ties; bound to one only, and that a nation without a home, by spiritual affinity! No one possessed from his childhood more richly than Spinoza the qualities which would make him alive to this contradiction. His earliest studies were in the Bible and the Talmud. He tormented the Rabbins with questions. One of these, Mortrera, did not refuse answers. He was pleased with the boy's vivacity, and did not find any cause to complain of his docility or his application. To Mortrera he owed his Hebrew culture. Van den Ende, a popular teacher in Amsterdam, whose school was much frequented by the sons of the richer merchants there, was his Latin teacher. Van den Ende is said to have been a political plotter, and to have imbued his pupils with atheistical opinions. There is no evidence that Spinoza was affected by his scoffs. The eyes of his daughter, who sang and played to the pupils, and helped them in their Latin lessons, affected him far more seriously. Whether the clear complexion, dark brows, and penetrating looks of the young philosopher had any power over her heart, we do not know. She gave her hand to a rival at the school. This little romance stands by itself in Spinoza's life. The shadow may have extended over the whole of it.

Benedicti de Spinosæ opera quæ supersunt omnia, Jenæ, 1802, and *Collectiones de Vita*, vol. ii., p. 543.

His Jewish origin.

Under the Rabbins.

Learning Latin.

In love.

45. Philology, oriental and classical, had not been without

Pursuing physics.

their influence on Spinoza. But soon, as might be expected in that time, physical studies took possession of him. Descartes inspired him with his interest for them. Descartes pointed out to him their connection with moral and divine inquiries. Descartes suggested that the forms and demonstrations of geometry were not inapplicable to either. These lessons would have been imperfect if they had not been joined with two others which he owed to his Jewish kinsmen. One was the fruit of their valuable maxim, that every youth, if the bias of his mind be ever so much towards letters, should pursue some mechanical calling. He became a maker of spectacles and of optical instruments. So his physical pursuits were illustrated by actual experiments. The other benefit which he owed to the Jews was expulsion from their body. He had long been suspected. The Rabbins remembered his rude curiosity. But Mortrera was convinced that his pupil could not be unfaithful to the law. Spinoza said nothing which could lay him open to any accusation. Two youths, we are told, who pretended to have difficulties of their own, drew from him some opinions respecting angels which were in direct opposition to rabbinical, if not to scriptural teaching. The synagogue was informed of his heresy. He was too manly to deny it. Mortrera, once convinced, became the bitterest of his denouncers. The *Schammatha*—the bell, book, and candle of modern Judaism—went forth against him. The sentence was terrible; the persecution of an embittered sect, which followed it, was dangerous. Spinoza left Amsterdam, not without having incurred some risk of his life. But the Jews were aware that they were losing one who might be powerful as an adversary, as well as a champion. Bribes were held out to him, as well as threats. The latter fixed him as much as the former in his alienation from the synagogue, though they did not drive him to any other communion. He conversed with Christians, read the New Testament, and felt an admiration for the character of Christ, which sometimes expressed itself in language that might surprise us; accepted certain passages of St. Paul as embodying his deepest convictions. After he went to the Hague he not unfrequently attended the Calvinistic worship; but he was never baptized, or affected the profession of Christianity. He became simply a philosopher; led a frugal, severe life; showed great indifference to money and to outward indulgences; held much intercourse, by letter and personally, with scholars and men of science—occasionally with statesmen; obtained the respect of all who knew him. De Witt for a short time gave him a small pension. He had the horror of seeing the pensionary murdered. This event could not have increased his interest in political

Working at a trade.

Excommunicated.

Offered bribes.

Tenor of his life.

affairs, which had never been strong. Nevertheless, an ineffectual journey to Utrecht to meet the Prince de Condé, who had requested an interview with him, awakened suspicion in the people at the Hague that he was a French spy. His hostess being frightened, he told her that he would go out and incur the fate of his old benefactor, if the house was in any danger. He was afterwards urged by the Elector Palatine to take the chair of philosophy at Heidelberg. He was told that he should be allowed to teach with entire freedom. He did not know what meaning would be given to the word freedom at Heidelberg; therefore he declined. These facts, so honourable to the character of Spinoza, with a testimony to the sobriety, quietness, and disinterestedness of his general conduct, and to the kindliness and courtesy of his manners, we receive on the authority of Colerus, a Dutch clergyman, who regarded the doctrines which are set forth in his writings with unqualified abhorrence. Have we really prepared the way for our examination of those doctrines by introducing such statements, however well attested? Will they not increase our difficulty, if we are obliged—as we shall be obliged—to utter protests against some of the doctrines, especially those which bear directly on ethics, not less strong than those of Colerus? Shall we not be compelled to explain how they could have upheld a mind apparently so moral and balanced? Certainly we dare not evade this inquiry. Truth. we are confident, will not shrink from it or suffer for it.

His manliness.

Testimony of Colerus.

46. The first of Spinoza's works, in order of time, is entitled *The Principles of the Cartesian Philosophy Demonstrated Geometrically, with the Addition of certain Thoughts on Metaphysics.* We have heard with what rapture the pupil of the Sorbonne, the Catholic priest, learnt the primary maxims of Descartes. Now, conceive a young Jew, educated as Benedict Spinoza was educated, falling in with those same maxims. He has been taught from his childhood to say,—"The Lord thy God, O Israel, is one God!" The words have printed themselves in his memory. They have been illustrated by all the lessons he has read out of his sacred books. God is in them the beginning and end—the ground from which all things start—the object to which all things are pointing. Spinoza has become restless and impatient under the multitude of interpretations which he has heard of these books. The contradictions and the trivialities of the Rabbins will have struck him equally. The sneers of his Latin master were probably directed more against the vital principles than the dead comments. They may have aroused him to a sense of the contrast between them. Amidst floating masses of Talmudical ice there is something to which he

Renati Descartes, *Principiorum Philosophiæ, Pars* 1 *et* 2, *More Geometrico demonstratæ.*

The words of Scripture.

The Rabbins.

would fain moor his vessel, if he could. Then he hears how Descartes has *proved* the existence of God. That which had come to him through a long tradition actually belongs to his own time; that which had been repeated to him as if it came on the authority of dull, dreary men, whom he cannot reverence, will bear the test of demonstration. Yes! it is even so. This is no series of probable arguments to attest a foregone conclusion. Beginning from scepticism, we have arrived at certainty. God MUST be. Nothing in mathematics is so sure. This assurance is the ground of all mathematical assurance. Mathematical forms, not Talmudical gossip, are fittest to express it.

Glimpses of a Philosophy.

The New and the Old.

47. So would the young Jew reason, half hoping that his new discoveries would confirm rather than shake the faith of his forefathers, half doubting whether his "sacred books," and all others, might not be mere embodiments of an idea which we should possess as well without them. But then comes the excommunication. He has nothing to do with this faith of his forefathers; the blessings of the children of Abraham, whatever they may be, are not his. Without a father's house or a fatherland, he must seek a home in the ideal region. He must cling to these firm, unbending demonstrations. What can be brought within their terms and conditions he will hold fast; the rest must be treated as prejudice and fiction. Judaism has asserted mightily that God is, and that He is One. To this doctrine Spinoza will adhere—will cast away whatever his books speak of adaptation to human conditions and circumstances—that he may adhere to it. But how is this Jewish doctrine of unity—that is to say, of the separation of God from all his creatures—compatible with this belief of him as being at the root of our mind, implied in all our thoughts, words, and acts? Must there not be some unity which is not exclusive, not negative? Christianity seems to speak of such a unity. He is attracted towards many of its statements. But the New Testament seems to be based on that idea of a union of Godhead with the limitations of manhood which has caused him to be suspicious of the Old. He can retain his Judaism so far as it excludes the idea of a Trinity or an Incarnation. But can he retain it in the presence of all this mighty world which physical studies are opening to him? Can he separate that world from God? He will do his best. He will not yield, if he can help it, to any confusion between the Absolute Being and the Creatures. Whether he can help it is another question.

The divorce between them.

The Unity of Spinoza.

Charge of Atheism against Spinoza.

48. We have advanced a little further, possibly, than the principles of the Cartesian philosophy, geometrically demonstrated, would lead us, though all we have said is really there, and

will be found to be evolving itself out of the different definitions, axioms, and propositions whereof it consists. Our object in bringing forth the leading characteristics of Spinoza in connection with this book is twofold. First, we wish the reader to observe that the charge of Atheism, which Malebranche, and others of his day, brought against him, is explained by the very facts which refute it. The foundation of his mind was laid in the confession of God. This confession, which he brought with him from the Scriptures, became the ground of all his philosophy after he had learnt in the school of Descartes. But Malebranche, looking at the *result* of the process, might have reason to say,—"The God whom you present to us in your philosophy is altogether a different God—different in character, purpose, essence—from the Being who is set before us in the Jewish Scriptures. You are imposing upon us a name, while you have taken away that which the name represents." He might say this, and he would be likely to say it all the more indignantly because he would discern in Spinoza certain deviations from the old Judaism, and certain approximations to Christian ideas, which might make him dread lest they should be confounded; and also because he was jealous for the honour of Descartes, to whom he owed so many of his deepest convictions. Men more scrupulous in their use of vituperative epithets than the French divines of the seventeenth century, might, with these excuses and with these provocations, apply the term "Atheist" to Spinoza. It would convey their meaning. But a historian, who does not look at doctrines and systems in the lump, who traces the gradual accretions in the mind of each particular thinker, may not yield to this temptation. He is bound to show that Spinoza was not guilty of using sacred words in a double sense. He did start from the Hebrew belief in God as the author and ground of all things. When he said that the belief which is implied in the *Cogito ergo sum* involves a belief in a Being who is absolutely free from all our imperfections, he took those words as Descartes and Malebranche took them. The divergence begins afterwards. How wide it was we wish all to feel. How a Christian may be saved from the conclusions into which Spinoza was inevitably led, we wish him to understand. But we shall miss that knowledge, and the strength as well as the humiliation that might accompany it, if we adopt the language of Malebranche, or try to justify it by what may be a justification for him. Whether the word *Pantheism* may be substituted in an indictment against Spinoza for that of Atheism we shall consider hereafter.

Injustice of the charge.

Excuse for it.

The historian has not that excuse.

Pantheism.

49. Next we wish to say a word respecting the method of the book. M. Saisset, whose introduction to his translation of

Spinoza's Geometry

How it may deceive us.

Why he adopted it.

The fact of the Divine existence being admitted, where are we to learn the Divine nature?

The historical Revelation.

The geometrical method.

Spinoza should be read by all students, though they should beware of following its statements unreservedly, says,—"We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by his geometrical forms. Spinoza may be said, no doubt, to demonstrate his doctrine; but he demonstrates it under the condition of certain data which, in fact, assume it and contain it." The caution is very important. It is given with an express intimation that Spinoza was not in any sense a Sophist; that he was thoroughly, profoundly sincere in his convictions; and that he had not the least intention of imposing upon his readers. The two statements, which are perfectly compatible, might have been reconciled to our entire satisfaction if M. Saisset had appended two observations to them. One is, that Spinoza, having learnt in the school of Descartes that mathematical forms derive all their probative force from certain premises in our mind, could not suspect himself of making an unfair use of them, or of reasoning in a circle, because he was, as M. Saisset expresses it, "developing," rather than demonstrating his doctrine. The other is, that mathematical forms were the only forms in which he could expound that idea of the divine Being, which was in his mind the substitute for the prejudices as well of the Synagogue as of the Church. Let the Being of God be a *datum* of man's mind, as Descartes said it was, the question *what* He is still requires an answer. The answer, according to Jews and Christians, is given by God Himself. He reveals Himself as the king over a special nation. By His government of it, by the contrast of His acts with the acts of those whom He rules, by educating their minds into conformity with His, He shows what He is, and what He would have them be; He distinguishes Himself from all false gods which men have made for themselves out of the objects of Nature, or out of their own conceptions. Christians add that the revelation did not fulfil its promise—that the false images of God could not be entirely confounded—until the true image had been fully shown forth in His Son taking human flesh and dwelling among men—till His Spirit had come forth to draw men of all kindreds and tribes into one family,—and to purify them from the tempers and inclinations which divide them from God and from each other. This idea of revelation being discarded as unworthy of the perfections of God, the only alternative for a man thoroughly believing in the witness which the heart and reason of man bear to the existence of God, is to deduce His perfections from that primary witness. The more formal the deductions are—the less they blend themselves with any facts and experiences of life—the more they will serve this purpose. That will be the test that they are purified from the feelings and opinions which other men have confounded with their acknowledgments of God. The two methods are thus brought into direct collision and comparison. The latter has all the advantage of being presented to us by an accurate and logical thinker, who will expose to the utmost any defects which he discovers in that which he rejects—whose truthfulness will not allow him to evade or conceal the full meaning and consequences of his own.

Spinoza's Definitions.
Substance.
Mind.
Body.
God.
What predication means.
Substances when distinguished.
The *Cogito ergo sum*.
The existence of God.
The idea of God the ground of human blessedness.

50. For the reason which M. Saisset has given, it behoves the reader of this Treatise to watch carefully Spinoza's definitions of *Thought*, *Idea*, *the objective reality of an Idea*, and his distinction between ideas in themselves, in their highest sense (*eminenter*), and our perception of them (*formaliter*). But the word which he should most pause over is *Substance*. "That whereof we have an immediate perception as of a subject; or that through which some perception is awakened in us, as of the property, quality, attribute, the real idea of which is in us; is called *Substance*." "The Substance in which thought dwells immediately is *Mind*." "The Substance which is the immediate ground or subject of extension, and of the accidents which presuppose extension, as figure, position, movement, is called *Body*." "The Substance which we understand to be in itself supremely perfect, in which we perceive nothing involving any defect, or diminution of perfection, is called GOD." "When we speak of anything as contained in the nature or conception of something else, it is the same as if we were to say that it is true of that thing, or may be predicated of that thing." "Two substances are said to be really distinguished when it is possible for either of them to exist without the other." The propositions which follow these definitions are these:—1. "We cannot be absolutely certain of anything as long as we are ignorant of our own existence." 2. "*I am* must be known by itself." 3. "That I have a body is not a primary truth, or one which can be known by itself." 4. "*I am* can only be known so far as *I think*." To this point we are on plain Cartesian ground. Spinoza's Treatise answers sternly to its profession. Nor does the next proposition take us beyond that ground. 5. "The existence of God is known from the mere consideration of His nature." In a scholium upon it, Spinoza leaves his hard geometry, and becomes eloquent. "From this proposition many grand consequences follow. Yes; upon this one fact, that existence belongs to the nature of God,—in other words, that the conception of God involves the necessary existence of God, just as it is involved in the conception of a triangle that its angles are equal to two right angles,—and that His existence, as His essence, is Eternal Truth;—on this, I say, depends almost all the knowledge of His attributes whereby we are drawn to the love of Him,

which is the supreme blessedness. Wherefore it is to be mightily desired that the human race should at length join us in embracing this great truth. I own that there are some current prejudices which greatly impede the clear understanding of it. But if any one with a good heart, impelled by the simple love of truth and of his own highest advantage, will examine the subject, seriously weighing in his mind what I have said in my meditations in answer to objections, and especially what I have written respecting divinity in the first chapter of my Appendix, he will not doubt any longer whether he has or has not an idea of God which is the very foundation of human happiness; for he will perceive that the idea of God is far different from the ideas of other things; he will be satisfied that God, in respect to His essence and existence, differs generically from all things else."

The love of God.

Lessons of Spinoza.

All have the idea of God.

Spinoza breaking loose from Descartes.

51. Spinoza speaks, it will be seen, not merely of acknowledging God, but of actually loving Him. It is not an expression which occurs once or twice, but continually in his works. It could not have been adopted for any rhetorical purpose, or to procure any credit for his system or himself. And, coming forth, in the midst of hard mathematics, from a man who never willingly forsook them—who avoided sentiment habitually—it is very startling, and, we think, very affecting. Nor does he isolate himself from his kind. He thinks they all ought to share in this love, and would, if certain hindrances were taken out of their way. When our readers know what these hindrances are, they may think, as we do, that, were Spinoza's doctrine to prevail, the influences by which God most draws men either to the love of Himself, or to trust in His truth, would be lost, and that the earth would be left bare of His presence. But when we only look at the man and his history, we may rejoice to think that this was far from his purpose; we may be humbled by discovering how much more he believed than many of us whose reason and warrant for belief would seem to be far stronger and deeper than his. In a scholium to the next proposition (which affirms that the idea of God in us necessarily involves the idea of God in Himself) Spinoza treats the assertion of those who say they have no idea of God, and yet that they love Him and worship Him, as self-contradictory. All teaching about God must be in that case as impossible as teaching a man blind from his birth the differences of colours. What such persons mean, he says, is, that they can form no image or likeness of God in their brain—surely the most opposite thing to an idea of God. So far our Jew is a pure Cartesian. But now he parts company with Descartes. The difference between him and his master, at first sight, does not appear to be a radical one. Descartes thought that the demonstration of the Being of God from the idea of God in man

involved two axioms:—1st. That *whatsoever is able to effect that which is greater and more difficult, can effect that which is less and easier.* 2ndly. *It is a greater thing to create or to preserve a substance than the attributes or properties of a substance.* Spinoza argues ably and ingeniously against the epithets "greater" or "less" as applicable to creation; as ably against the attempt to separate a substance from its own attributes and properties, or to reason from the qualities of one substance to those of a different kind. But it is clear that much more is involved in the controversy than the fitness or unfitness of this language, than the necessity or superfluousness of these axioms for their particular objects. We are coming to the very heart of Spinozism. He substitutes this axiom for those which he rejects,—*That by how much anything is more perfect in its nature, it involves a greater and more necessary existence; and conversely, by how much anything involves a greater and more necessary existence, by so much is it more perfect.* The supreme existence is the furthest removed from nothingness; the supreme existence is the furthest removed from anything contingent. He adds two important notes. The first is,—*That albeit many things are said to exist necessarily, because a determinate cause is assigned for their production, we are not now speaking of these, but only of that necessity and possibility which follows from the consideration of the nature or essence of the thing, no account being taken of its cause.* The second is,—*That we are not speaking of beauty, or of the other perfections which men are wont to call such through superstition or ignorance.* BY PERFECTION I UNDERSTAND ONLY REALITY OR EXISTENCE.

Necessity in the effects and in the cause.

Existence the all in all of Deity.

52. The point at which Spinoza deserts Descartes is the point at which we may take leave of his geometrical demonstrations of the Cartesian philosophy. The second and third parts of his treatise are chiefly physical; what he says on the great subject of all his thoughts in the first, is said better and more satisfactorily in the *Cogitata Metaphysica* which are appended to it. These cogitations show us at least as clearly as the formal propositions why geometry had such a charm for him. They show us also how little he was indebted to geometry for that principle which possessed and governed his mind; how little the forms of geometry can really impart it to any other mind. BEING was that in which he believed and rested. GOD was Being in the fullest and most transcendent sense. No measures which were applicable to the creatures could be applicable to Him. The words "less" and "greater" could not express any of the exercises of His power. We cannot infer anything about Him from our finite acts. We must refer all to Him. We must begin with acknowledging

The *Cogitata Metaphysica*

The ground of Spinoza's convictions.

The Being of God.

the Infinite. The *Cogitata Metaphysica* "develop" this doctrine. They strictly correspond to their name. No treatise that we know of so well enables us to understand why Aristotle may have originally adopted the word metaphysics; why he connected it with theology; what has been its force for the generations subsequent to him.

Cap i. *De Ente reali, ficto, et rationis.*

Pure imaginations.

Forms of the intellect.

These are not ideas.

Substance and mode.

53. Spinoza does not start with any definition of metaphysics; his purpose is to explain some of the words which occur oftenest in metaphysical treatises, and which occasion much perplexity to the readers of them. He begins with Being (*Ens*). He defines *Ens* to be *whatever is clearly and distinctly perceived to exist necessarily*, or *at all events to have the possibility of existence.* This definition obviously excludes,—1. The *ens fictum*, such as a chimœra, of which, by its nature, we can have no distinct perception, which a man puts together by a mere act of will out of two contradictory elements. 2. The *ens rationis* which is a mode of thought adopted either (*a*) as a means of *retaining* things more firmly and clearly in the memory: to this head he refers *genus*, *species*, and the terms of logic, strictly so called; or (*b*) as a means of *explaining* one thing by comparison with another: to this head he refers *time*, *number*, *measure;* or (c) as a means of denoting some negation or privation, to which, by an act of our imagination, we attribute existence. Among these he reckons *blindness*, *extremity*, *darkness.* "Whereby it clearly appears that these modes of thinking are not ideas of things, and can in no wise be brought under ideas; wherefore they have no *ideatum* which has a necessary or possible existence." The *ens rationis* is therefore merely nothing if it is looked for *without* the intellect; *within* the intellect it is real, like any other thought. The greatest care is necessary in order to avoid the confusion between things themselves and our modes of perceiving them. For the distinction between *ens reale* and *ens rationis*, Spinoza substituted the distinction between *substance* and *mode*. There is a being the essence of which involves existence. There is a being of which the essence does not involve existence. That is the *form* of the distinction; what are the limits of it, we can only understand if we recur to our fundamental doctrine.

Cap ii. *Quid Esse Essentiæ, quid Esse Existentiæ, &c.*

54. I. In the absolute, perfect sense God IS. Whatever I find formally in created things I must in a more eminent sense find in Him. SPACE I clearly conceive of without any existence. All the perfections of space must be in Him. But space is divisible. Division imports imperfection. That I cannot attribute to Him. I must suppose some attribute in Him which possesses all the perfections of matter, and has in it nothing material. II. God understands Himself and all other things;

that is to say, He has all things objectively in Him. III. God is the cause of all things, and works with absolute freedom. In the creatures we discover four kinds of being. 1. The being of essence which they have in God. 2. The being of idea; for all things are contained objectively in the idea of God. 3. The being of potency which belongs to things uncreated, which may be created by God's will. 4. The being of existence which they have in themselves, after they have been created by God. In respect of the creature all these distinctions hold. You will realize the distinction between essence and existence in human works best, says Spinoza, not by reasoning about it, but by going to a sculptor's studio and asking him to tell you what the statue was before it appeared in the block of marble. But in God are no such distinctions. His essence, existence, intellect, are all one.

The absolute Being.

Idea.

Potency.

Existence

Essence and existence, how shown to be different.

55. From Being in itself, he goes on to explain some of its affections, by which he means the same thing as Descartes means by attributes. "Being," he says, "in so far forth as it is Being, doth not by itself affect us; wherefore it requires to be explained by some attribute, from which, however, it is not distinguishable in fact, but only in our reason." Those affections or attributes of which he proposes to speak are, the *Necessary*, the *Impossible*, the *Possible*, and the *Contingent*. A thing is called necessary and impossible in respect of its essence, or in respect of its cause. "In respect of His essence, God necessarily exists. In respect of its essence, a chimera is impossible. In respect of their cause, material things are said to be necessary, because God has willed that they should exist; they are said to be impossible without His will." Spinoza therefore affirms that created things have of themselves no necessity, because they have of themselves no essence, and do not exist by themselves. The possible and the contingent he treats not as affections of things at all, but as *defects* of our intellect. "If one attends to nature, and sees how it depends on God, one will find nothing that is contingent; that is to say, which might exist or not exist. No created thing acts of its own strength, even as no created thing of its own strength began to exist. Nothing becomes, except by the power of the Cause which creates all things. God produces all things at each moment. . . . Since in God there is no inconstancy or mutation, the things which He produces now He must have decreed that he would produce from eternity. And since God's decree that anything should exist is the sole cause of its existence, it follows that there is a necessity for all created things from eternity. Nor can we say that these are contingent because God could have decreed otherwise; for since in eternity there is no *when*,

Cap. iii. *De eo quod est necessarium, &c.*

No necessity in created things.

The Possible

The Divine Decrees.

Nothing in itself contingent.

or *before*, or *after*, or any affection of time, it follows that we cannot speak of God as being before those decrees, so that He might have decreed something else." Such language may seem to interfere with the liberty of the human will. Spinoza does not pretend to decide how it is that a man wishes nothing, works nothing, save that which God from eternity hath decreed, and yet that man hath a liberty of willing and acting. Both, he says, are facts. Neither must be rejected because we cannot reconcile them. "If we attend to our nature we know that we are free in our actions, and that we deliberate about a number of things, merely because we choose to deliberate about them. If we attend to the nature of God we clearly and distinctly perceive that all things depend upon Him, and that nothing exists except that which God decreed from eternity should exist. But how the human will is so generated each moment by God that it remains free, this we know not." More of this hereafter.

That man is free.

Apparent contradictions to be admitted.

56. The next chapter leads us to a consideration of *Eternity*, *Duration*, and *Time*. The distinction between eternity and duration turns upon the distinction between the Being whose essence involves actual existence, and the being whose essence only involves a possible existence. Eternity belongs to the infinite existence of God; duration is the attribute of the existence of created things. You cannot, except in thought, separate duration from existence. Just what you take from the duration of any creature you take from its existence. But that this duration may be determined, we compare it with the duration of those things that have a certain fixed motion, and this comparison is called *Time*. Time, therefore, is not an affection of things; it is only a mode of thought, serving to explain duration. Observe that in duration we speak of a greater and a less, as if it were composed of parts. Hence it is an attribute of existence, but not of essence. This subject is handled at greater length in the second appendix. Spinoza points out some errors into which metaphysicians have fallen. The eternity of God has been separated from His essence. There has been a perplexity between the belief that things are eternal so far as they exist in the nature of God, and that they are eternal as created things which we see in this world. Eternity has been contemplated as a certain species of duration. "That infinite existence I call eternity which is to be attributed to God alone, but not to any created thing, no not if the duration of things were to be without end."

Cap. iv. and also Par. ii., cap. i.

Duration belongs to the creature.

Time a mode of thought.

Confusion of the created and the divine.

57. After speaking of *Opposition*, *Order*, *Agreement*, *Diversity*, *Subject*, *Adjunct*, as simply modes of thought, which, apart from the things themselves, are nothing, he goes on to consider the

Cap. iv., v. *De Uno, Vero, et Bono.*

terms which are commonly called transcendental, *the One*, *the True*, *the Good*. "This term one," he says, "means, as people affirm, something real outside of the intellect. But what this adds to Being they cannot explain; a sufficient proof that they are confounding the beings of the reason with real being. But I say that unity can in no wise be distinguished from the thing itself, and that it adds nothing to being, but is only a mode of thought by which we separate a thing from other things which are like it, or in some manner agree with it." All this is consistent with the main principle of Spinoza,—God is; He is the supremely perfect Being; unity is not grafted upon His being, but implied in His being. From the one, we proceed to the true and the false. The first notion, he says, of truth and falsehood seems to have been drawn from narratives. The narrative of that which had actually happened was said to be true, the narrative of that which had not happened to be false. Then it was taken to denote the agreement of an idea with that reality which answers to the idea. The true idea shows us the thing as it is in itself; the false idea shows us the thing otherwise than it is; for ideas are nothing else than mental narratives or histories of nature. It is a mistake, therefore, to speak of truth as a transcendental term or affection of being. It is applied improperly or rhetorically to the things themselves. Next we come to the *Good* and the *Evil*. "A thing considered in itself is neither called good nor evil, but only in respect to another thing which it enables to acquire that which it desires, or the contrary. And so everything may be, in respect of different persons, at the very same time, good and evil. Achithophel's counsel is said, in the Bible, to have been very good for Absalom, very bad for David, whose destruction he was compassing. Many other things are good which are not good to all. Health is good for men, neither good nor bad for brutes or plants, to whom it hath no relation." [Surely Spinoza must mean us to translate *salus* in its theological sense, not in its ordinary one: he could not have supposed that beasts or plants are not liable to disease.] "But God is called supremely good, because He bestows upon each and preserves in each his existence, than which nothing can be more desired by each. But evil is absolutely nothing, as is manifest." He discards the notion of a metaphysical good as of a metaphysical truth or unity, and he asks the question, Whether God can be said to be good before the creation of things? Such an attribute, he says, has simply reference to His action upon the creatures. Many other attributes, he says, we ascribe to Him, which can only be potentially true before the creation of things, as when we call Him Judge, Merciful, and so forth.

Unity not separable from being.

Use of the terms "true" and "false."

Nothing good in itself, but in its action on something else.

Evil, nothing.

Appendix, part ii., cap. iii. *De Immensitate Dei.*
The Infinite.
Ubiquity.
Power.
Cap. iv. *De Immutabilitate Dei.*
Cap. v. *De Simplicitate Dei.*

58. Spinoza affirms strongly that the epithet *Infinite* as applied to God, though it has a negative form, has not a negative sense; it expresses the positive perfection which all finite creatures want. The word *Immensity* he regards with suspicion. It savours of quantity and limitation, while it attempts to set quantity and limitation aside. The *Ubiquity* of God he believes, but cannot explain. He prefers to connect it with that inward nature of the Divine Being which produces all things, and upholds all things continually. He dares not separate the power of God or the omnipresence of God from His essence. The *Immutability* of God's decrees he has already spoken of in words which Arnauld or Calvin might have accepted. His *Simplicity* is the subject of a special and very important chapter in the second appendix. After proving that God cannot be a composite being, seeing that the elements of which He would be composed must have an existence independent of Him, he concludes that all the distinctions between His attributes are merely distinctions of our reason, not existing in His nature.

Cap. vi. *De Vita Dei.*
Life in the creatures and in God.
Cap vii. *De Intellectu Dei.*
In enormes errores inciderunt.
God his own object.

59. In every case Spinoza exhibits a horror of applying the limitations of natural things or of man to God. In what sense, he asks, is *life* to be predicated of Him? Life he would define generally, that *force* by which things *continue in their own being*. This force is not identical with the things; they may be rightly said to *have* it. But it *is* identical with the essence of God. And that, Spinoza says, in the opinion of many theologians, is the reason why, while Joseph swears by the life of Pharaoh, the Scriptures never speak of the life of God, but of the living God. In speaking of the *Wisdom* or understanding of God, Spinoza protests vehemently,—1. Against the notion of assuming a matter external to God and co-eternal with Him upon which He works. 2. Against the notion that there are certain things of their own nature contingent, or necessary, or impossible, which God knows as such, and therefore is ignorant whether they exist or not. 3. Against the notion that He knows contingencies from circumstances, as men know them who learn from a long experience. These "enormous errors" he looks upon as part of the supposition that the ideas of God are terminated, like ours, by objects out of Himself. "He is the object of his own knowledge. He is His own knowledge. Those who say that the world is the object of God's knowledge are far less wise than those who say that the building raised by a distinguished human architect is the object of his knowledge. For the builder is forced to seek for materials outside of himself. But God seeks no material outside of Himself; but the things have been formed as to their essence and their existence by Him. When it is asked "if God

Knowledge of sins.

Knowledge of universals and individuals.

Oneness of the Divine idea.

knows sins," Spinoza answers that "God must understand the things whereof He is the cause, especially since nothing can exist for a moment without the divine co-operation. But seeing that evil things and sins have no existence in themselves, but exist only in minds, God cannot know them out of these minds." He utterly repudiates the scholastic dream that God knows universal, but not individual things. That, he says, would be to make the divine knowledge of that which is unreal, and to exclude it from the things which it has called into existence, and which it sustains. He rejects also, with great energy, the thought that the decree or idea of God can be various or multifold because created things are various or multifold. "If we attend to the analogy of all nature, we are able to consider it as one being, and consequently there will be only one idea of God, one decree concerning the *Natura Naturata.*"

Natura Naturans and *Natura Naturata*.

Cap. viii. *De Voluntate Dei.*

Personality.

The Understanding, Will, Power of God inseparable.

60. The reader no doubt suspects that he has found in this phrase the pantheism which had been eluding him before. He may recollect that a *Natura Naturata* implies a *Natura Naturans,* and, if so, are not Nature and God the same? The conclusion may sound inevitable. To one who has been in the habit of rising from "Nature up to Nature's God," it is inevitable. That it is not so with Spinoza; that the divine nature is regarded by him as in no sense deduced from created things, the chapters on the *Will* of God, on the *Power* of God, on *Creation*, and on the *Co-operation* of God, abundantly testify. "The *Will of God* wherewith He loveth Himself, necessarily follows on the knowledge of God wherewith He understandeth Himself. But how these things are distinguished—to wit, His essence, His intellect, His will—I set down among the things which we wait to know." "Nor do I forget the word Personality, which theologians use to explain this difficulty; but though I am not ignorant of the word, I am ignorant of its signification; nor can I form any clear conception of it, *although I firmly believe that in the blessed vision of God which is promised to the faithful, God will reveal this to His own.*" This honest confession and this earnest hope are among the most touching passages that we recollect to have read in any author: they should always be remembered by those who are passing judgment on Spinoza. Proceeding to the creatures, he observes that God has not only decreed that things should exist, but that they should be so constituted as that their existence should depend on His will and power. "Wherefore we perceive clearly that the understanding of God and His will and power, whereby He hath created things, both knows them and preserves or loves them, can in no wise be distinguished in themselves, but only in respect of our thought." Speaking under this head of the

Application of the words in Romans, chap ix.

Election and reprobation.

Men doomed as serpents

Cap. ix. *De Potentiâ Dei.*

Cap. x. *De Creatione.*

Ex nihilo, why omitted

Scripture language respecting God's hatred, he makes a curious and unexpected use of the celebrated passage in the Epistle to the Romans,—"For when the children had not been born, and had done no good or evil, that the purpose of God by election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said that the elder should serve the younger." In this sentence and in all that follows, he contends, St. Paul is showing that the anger, love, hatred, which are imputed to God in the Scriptures, do not correspond in the least to the vulgar notions of anger, love, hatred. He asks in the language of Ultra-Augustinianism, "If now thou askest, why then doth God admonish men? the answer is easy; to wit, that God had from eternity decreed at that certain time to admonish men, that those might be converted whom He willed to be saved. If then thou askest whether God could not save them without that admonition? I answer He could. You will ask perchance again, why then doth He not save them? To this I will answer when thou hast told me why God did not separate the waves of the Red Sea without a vehement east wind, why He does not accomplish a multitude of other things without intermediate causes. Thou wilt ask me, finally, why then are the impious punished, for they act of their own nature and according to the divine decree? I answer, that it is of the divine decree that they are punished. And if only those are to be punished whom we feign to sin of their own choice, why do men take pains to exterminate poisonous serpents, which only offend from their own nature, and cannot do otherwise?" He goes on to protest against all limitations of the power of God which are deduced from the nature of things, asserting again that all our notions of contingency and possibility are derived from our ignorance, and cannot be used to bind His freedom. He divides this power into absolute and ordinate; absolute signifying what it is in itself, ordinate what is expressed in His decrees. He hints at the further distinction into ordinary and extraordinary. But in what sense the extraordinary or miraculous is possible he leaves for another inquiry. Then comes the great question of creation. He defines "creation to be an operation in which no causes concur except the efficient cause. In other words, a created thing is that which presupposes nothing for its existence except God." He wishes us to observe,—1. That he omits from his definition the ordinary words "out of nothing," because he cannot help perceiving that philosophers have given to the word *nothing* a sort of positive sense, as if it were real, instead of the negation of reality. 2. That his definition does not exclude the idea of God creating with a view to some end in His own mind, but only the idea that He has any motive out of Himself. 3. He says his definition excludes the idea of a creation of modes or accidents, for that would suppose some created substance besides God. And 4. That it assumes time or duration to have begun with creation, not to have been antecedent to creation; for then it must be either beside God, or God must Himself be limited by it. On this last point he dwells during the remainder of the chapter. One or two points in his argument are well worthy of our notice. "There are some," he says, "who assert that the thing produced may be contemporaneous with the cause, and that seeing God was from eternity, His effects also might have been produced from eternity. And this they further confirm by the example of the Son of God, who was from eternity begotten by the Father. But it is evident that they confound eternity with duration; . . . for they suppose that the same eternity which they attribute to the Son of God is possible for creatures. They suppose that there can be a duration separate from created things, or an eternity that is separate from God. I answer then, that is false that God can communicate His eternity to creatures. The Son is not supposed to be a creature, but to be eternal as the Father. When He is said to be the begotten of the Father, the Father is said to communicate His eternity to Him." Spinoza did not, of course, accept this doctrine; but he states it in the terms which an orthodox writer would approve, and so far answers any argument which could be deduced from it against his opinion. The co-operation of God is, according to Spinoza, simply the continuous action of the divine will in preserving the natures which He has called into existence. "And thus," he says, "I have concluded what I had to say about the attributes of God. I have not divided them, as other authors have done, into communicable and incommunicable, which seems to me, I confess, a nominal, not a real division. *For the knowledge of God doth not more correspond to the knowledge of man, than the Dog in the Zodiac corresponds to the dog which barks in the streets; perhaps much less.*"

Final causes, under what condition admissible.

Created things cannot have been from eternity.

The idea of the Only Begotten.

Cap xi. *De Concensus Dei.*

Separation of divine and human knowledge.

61. The chapter which follows "*On the Human Mind*" is quite in harmony with this last announcement, and prepares us for the work of Spinoza which will come next before us. Created substance is either *extensa*, under the conditions of space, or *cogitans*, thinking. Under thinking substance he includes only human minds. What then, it is suggested, become of angels? They, it is answered, are not known by any natural light; we only learn their existence from revelation. The theologian, therefore, must take account of them; the metaphysician has nothing to do with them. Spinoza's metaphysics are eminently theological, in so far as they are

Cap. xii. *De Mente Humanâ*

Angels.

Theology and Metaphysics.

Immortality.

Possible explanation of miracles.

Liberty.

Will and thought one.

occupied mainly with the being and attributes of God. But as he refers all knowledge of God to natural light, he rejects the name. He does not admit that the thinking substance, or any substance, can be generated; it is called into existence by omnipotence. Nor will he attribute to the thinking substances, *apart from God*, any immortality. It exists solely by His will; He has power to create and to destroy it. But as students of His acts and laws we may affirm that He has produced a substance which cannot be destroyed either by itself or by any other substance. It may be objected that God could break his laws in this case, as in others, by a miracle. But the wiser theologians, says Spinoza, say that God does nothing contrary to nature, but only above nature. "That is, as I understand them, that God works by many laws which he hath not communicated to the human intellect, but which, if they were communicated, would be found as natural as the rest." Besides the immortality of the soul, Spinoza asserts, as a fact of undoubted experience, its liberty. It is a thinking substance. It has an action of its own. It can affirm and deny. These actions which proceed from itself are called *volitions*. These are not determined by external circumstances. Food or starvation being before a man, he eats from an inward, not an external impulsion. Nay; is not the exercise of doubt and deliberation the very sign of his being? Why does he wish this or that? Because he is a thinking creature. All arguments which seek to get rid of those plain inferences of reason and experience arise, he says, either from the notion that the will is something by itself, distinct from the thinking substance, or from careless application of analogies drawn from bodies which are held in equilibrium by two external forces.

Is Spinoza a Pantheist?

Forms of Pantheism.

Indications respecting him.

62. If now we gather up the impressions we have received from the treatise, we shall find it difficult to connect them with our ordinary notions of pantheism. The pantheist we suppose either—1. To start from the world, and finding the necessity of some principle or soul to direct its operations, to call that soul or principle God; or, 2. To start from the conception of a Divine Being, and to treat the world as an emanation from Him. With the first of these forms of thought Spinoza has evidently no sympathy; none can be so diametrically opposed to all his principles and habits of mind. He begins from the Divine. The things which man beholds, and man himself, are altogether secondary and subordinate. But Spinoza affirms both to have been *created*, created in such a sense as to exclude emanation. He is afraid of analogies; he dreads the use of common names. Only he must in some

way assert the presence of God in all His works; only he must make the knowledge of Him the most necessary of all knowledge. To get rid of personality is no part of his aim, no triumph of his philosophy. He feels the want of it. He longs to see more clearly what it is. Christian ideas, the ideas even of the profoundest Christian theology, seem often in close contact with his mind. Somewhere and somehow he recognizes them, not the least out of mere courtesy, or from a wish to make terms with a popular opinion, but as a necessity of his argument, as demanded by his reason. In all questions concerning the divine decrees the Christian theologian of the sternest school will have no cause to fear that Spinoza will be staggered by his assertions. The doctrines of particular redemption and the everlasting reprobation of a great portion of mankind will not awaken the least horror in his mind. And yet the name Pantheist does belong to him in a very strict sense. The whole universe, as we shall find hereafter, is at last resolved into God. No will is really left to any creature, even though he accepts the facts which prove that man has a choice in his judgments and his actions.

His allusions to Christian theology.

His Calvinism.

63. We have hinted at the key which Spinoza's birth, education, and sufferings give us to the solution of these riddles. And it was not only those first words which were heard in the nursery that remained fixed in his heart. He did not merely receive the witness of a one God from his mother's lips. The voice which spoke to Moses out of the bush was uttering itself in his generation. It was no cunningly devised fable, no story of another day. There was a witness for it in the very nature and being of man; it might be brought forth in hard forms of geometry. In those forms it necessarily became contracted. Its life, its personality, were always threatening to disappear. The *I am* seems in the act of passing into the τὸ ὄν. But the change is never fully accomplished. The living God spoke still to the modern sage. He could not shake off the belief that His voice was *in some way* to be heard in the Bible. With all his physical science, all his reverence for the natural light, he bows before the God of his fathers. There is awe and trembling in the worshipper. Though so clear in his perceptions, though so calm in his utterances, he often shrinks and becomes confused in that presence. He does not feel that he is alone in it: all men are dwelling in it: were it withdrawn all would perish. But this God must be kept wholly aloof from human sympathies. In the effort to preserve that aloofness He becomes confounded with what is *not* human; and so the distinctions of good and evil, light and darkness, which

The voice out of the bush.

Spinoza recognizes in his heart, become often quite effaced in his philosophy. A calm consideration of his *Theologico Political Tractate*, and then of his *Ethics*, will explain our meaning, and will suggest thoughts that may be far more profitable to us than any denunciation of Spinoza can possibly be.

The *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*.
The old despotisms.
Duty of Holland.
Difficulty of discovering a Christian.
Faith confounded with credulity.
Objects of the treatise.
Estimates of prophecy.

64. The preface to the *Tractatus Theologico Politicus* is important as an interpretation of the author's purpose. He perceives that much of the folly and misery of the world has its origin in superstition; that superstition has its origin in the fear of capricious powers and influences which change their form and character as our circumstances change. He conceives the old monarchies encouraged these superstitions as props of their power; and again used this power to support the superstition, crushing by all means free thought and speech. He holds that the interests of the republic in which it is his happiness to dwell will be best promoted by the discouragement of superstition, and by adhering to the rule that the state will only take cognizance of overt acts against the peace of the communities, leaving words and opinions unshackled. He is much distressed by the spectacles which he observes in the Christian world. Christians profess to love peace, continence, good faith towards all. But whether a man is Christian, Greek, Jew, Heathen is now known chiefly by certain external signs and badges. A low ambition, a terrible covetousness of outward good things an inclination to win the favour of the vulgar by turning the pulpit into a stage, is found combined with a disposition to identify faith with credulity, to suppose that intellect is essentially corrupt, to substitute the lessons of heathen teachers for the Scriptures at the very time that the Scriptures are treated with the greatest apparent reverence and flattery. Seeing that much ignorance and much hatred were the consequence of these misdoings, Spinoza determined to examine afresh the Scriptures, and to affirm nothing about them, to admit nothing as their doctrine which he did not learn from the Scriptures themselves. The first question he asked himself was—"What is prophecy, and in what wise did God reveal Himself to the prophets? and whether they were acceptable to God because they had very high thoughts concerning God, or only for their piety and goodness?". Knowing this, he could easily determine that the authority of the prophets had great weight in whatever affected virtue and the business of life, but that their opinions concern us very little. The next inquiry was why the Hebrews were chosen and called by God? "And when I saw that this meant nothing more than that God gave them a certain spot of the earth where

The Hebrew calling.

Universal truths all natural.

Prophetical adaptations.

The books of the Word.

Revelation and natural light have different objects and instruments

they might dwell securely and commodiously, I learned that the laws revealed to Moses by God were nothing but the laws of the special Hebrew empire, and, therefore, that none except the Hebrews were bound to receive them; nay, that even they were not bound by them except so long as their empire in Palestine lasted." Next he proceeded to inquire whether the Scriptures do represent the intellect of man as corrupt, and whether the Divine law revealed through prophets and apostles to the whole human race is anything different from that which the light of nature teaches? Then, whether miracles have happened contrary to the order of nature, and whether they teach the existence and Providence of God more clearly and distinctly than we discover them by investigating the causes of the things which we behold? "And since in those things which the Scripture expressly teaches I found nothing which contradicted my understanding; and I saw, moreover, that the prophets had taught nothing but very simple things, which every one might easily apprehend, and had adorned them with the style and strengthened them by the arguments by which the minds of a multitude might be most aroused to devotion towards God, I convinced myself that *Scripture leaves the reason absolutely free, and has nothing in common with philosophy, but that each may stand on its own footing.*" He shall go on, he says, to show that men, preferring the temporal to the eternal, have exalted the Divine books above the Divine Word, and that the revealed Word of God is not a certain number of books, but the simple conception of the Divine mind revealed to the prophets; to wit, that we should obey God with the whole mind, by cultivating justice and charity. "This I show was taught in Scripture according to the capacity and opinions of those to whom the prophets and apostles were sent to preach the Word of God; to whom they accommodated themselves, that men might receive it without any repugnance, and with their whole heart. Having thus exhibited the fundamentals of the faith, I conclude that the object of the knowledge of this revealed faith is simply obedience; and so, that it is distinguished from natural knowledge as well in its object as in its principle and in its means; and that they have nothing in common, but that each has its own region, and that neither ought to serve the other." Each man, therefore, must be left to the judgment of his own mind in forming his faith; only justice and charity are to be universally cultivated. He then proceeds to argue that the liberty which Scripture itself concedes may be safely granted; nay, cannot safely be withholden by any state. He argues that no one parts with

Modern states should grant unlimited freedom of thought and speech.

his natural rights, except by agreeing to transfer them to another who will defend them for him; that the power of the ruler for this purpose ought to be complete; that the subjects should not set up their individual privileges, which they have surrendered, against it; but that no man can cease to be a man, and that the ruler is bound, for his own and the safety of the kingdom, to acknowledge this natural right as still subsisting. Thence he passes to the republic of the Hebrews, and considers how religion was bound up with its polity. And he concludes, much as Hobbes concludes, that those who hold the supreme power in a state are not only defenders of civil but of sacred rights, and have the sole power of deciding what is just, what unjust, what pious, what impious; but that they exercise this power best, and are likely to preserve their power longest, if they grant to every one the power of thinking what he will, and of speaking what he thinks. Spinoza concludes his preface by exhorting the philosophical student to read, and the common herd to abstain from reading, his book. He knows that nothing can shake their prejudices, their superstition, their fear. They will do themselves no good, and they will misinterpret this treatise, as they misinterpret everything else. They will do others harm, who might use their minds freely if they were not checked by the thought that reason is intended to be the handmaid of theology. Those who are haunted by that notion, and wish to be emancipated from it, Spinoza thinks he can help greatly. He trusts he has written nothing which will not promote obedience to the laws of his country, piety, and good manners. If he has unwittingly given currency to any sentiment which the rulers of the land judge to be of that kind, he wishes it unspoken.

The Hobbes theory of government adopted by Spinoza.

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.

Submission to rulers.

Spinoza's opinions popular.

65. The conception of Hebrew law, history, and prophecy, which is disclosed in this preface is the ground of so many opinions which are current in our day, and is so exactly the reverse of the one which was set forth in the first volume of this sketch, that we may naturally feel anxious to examine the statements in the body of the treatise, believing that they have the most important bearing on moral and metaphysical inquiries. In any such examination it behoves us carefully to repudiate any advantage which we might derive from the bad reputation of Spinoza, and from the observations on the sins of Christian divines which he has placed at the threshold of his book. We not only believe our Jew philosopher to be more logical and learned, but to be more reverent than most who have adopted his arguments—than many who have tried to refute them. We have gladly dwelt upon all the circumstances of

They should be fairly contrasted with ours.

his early discipline, which account most easily and naturally for the disgust with which he regarded the rabbinical interpretations of the Bible. We are bound to own that there is equal justification for his complaints of the moral offences, as well as of the dislike to inquiry and of the preference for superstitious and slavish tenets, by which Christian advocates have been disgraced. The Bible, taken in the sense in which Spinoza does not take it, appears to us the one effectual witness against both. But we must leave the preface for that which it introduces.

His charges against Christians not to be evaded.

66. The first chapter of the treatise, "On Prophecy," opens with a definition,—"A prophet is he who interprets the revelations of God to those who cannot have a certain knowledge of the things revealed by God, and who, therefore, can only by mere faith embrace the things that are recorded." He goes on to say that "those things which we know by natural light depend upon the knowledge of God alone, and upon His eternal decrees. But seeing that this natural knowledge is common to all men—for it depends upon foundations common to all men—therefore it is not reckoned of much worth by the vulgar, who are always seeking after things rare and foreign from their own nature, and despise natural gifts; and, therefore, when they speak about higher knowledge, would have this natural knowledge cut off, although it has as good right to be called divine as the other (whatever that is), seeing that the nature of God and the decrees of God dictate it to us; and it differs not from that which all call divine, except that the latter extends beyond its limits, and that the laws of human nature, considered in themselves, cannot be the cause of it. But in respect of the certainty which the natural knowledge involves, and of the fountain, viz., God, from which it is derived, it yields in nothing to prophetical knowledge." The reader who will be at the pains to study this paragraph carefully will find in it a key to the whole treatise. Spinoza cannot give up his belief that there is a knowledge of God which belongs to all men. He can as little give up his faith that this knowledge proceeds from God—that He is the Author of it. In this sense, and on this ground, he calls it *natural* knowledge. Why not, one may ask, if God is so much above all created natures, as he has told us that He is—*super*natural? No—that word is offensive. That is what the vulgar are looking for. That is what they expect from the prophet or extraordinary man. May not, one might ask again, this instinct of the vulgar point to their need of a revelation of those common truths which, according to Spinoza's own statement, cannot be derived from themselves, must be derived from God? And if there is in the vulgar,

Prophecy, what it is.

Prophetical light and natural light.

Natural and supernatural.

Vulgar instincts, what they point to.

i. e., in the common people, an aversion from these common truths, does not this indicate some general perversity, from which they require to be delivered? And if they are to be delivered from it, can the deliverance come from some special men? If it comes *through* them, must not God be the author of it? But if so, may we not have here the explanation of some of those facts which Spinoza is about to examine? We do not wish to anticipate that examination. All we desire is, that the reader should keep his eyes open, and should not allow Spinoza or us to deny our own premises, or to play fast and loose with the terms natural and supernatural.

Study of Jewish prophecy, how to be conducted.

67. Having settled what the natural light can teach, he proceeds to inquire what the prophets professed to teach. This, he says, must be learnt only from themselves, but with this recollection, that the Jews never make mention of mediate or particular causes, but would say that money was brought them by God, and that God had disposed their hearts, and that God had said this and that to them, even when they are not alluding to any prophetical communication at all. Spinoza does not say whether this language of his countrymen was inaccurate language. It sounds rather like his own. One might think he had first learnt it from them, before he connected it with the principle of Descartes. But the object being to ascertain the *speciality* of prophecy, he proceeds to say that "All things which God revealed to the prophets were revealed either in words or in figures, or in both these ways together." And then, having investigated the various instances of the communication of the laws to Moses, the manifestation to Samuel, the appearance of the armed angel to Joshua, he advances to his general conclusion. That conclusion ought not to startle us when we read these preliminary words, which are so entirely in the spirit of all that have gone before. "It seemeth not a little hostile to reason to conclude that a created thing, depending upon God in the same manner as other things, could set forth the essence or the existence of God in act or in word, or could explain it through his own person." Here is the difficulty. That there is such a relation between man and God as to make a direct communication between man and God possible, is what Spinoza cannot understand or admit. There may be, he says, a special exception in the case of Christ; through his *mind* God may have manifested Himself to the apostles. He does not understand, he owns, what the Church says about Christ; he can, however, conceive a little of what is meant when He is called the Wisdom of God, and when God is said to have communicated in a more direct and spiritual manner with Him than with all other prophets. But he affirms of all besides Him, that "none, except by the help of imagination, hath received

Media of communication.

The impossibility of a revelation through a man assumed.

The idea of Christ, if true, must be exceptional.

the revelations of God, and that therefore, for the purpose of prophecy, there was need, not of a more perfect mind than other men have, but of a more lively imagination." When we recollect that Spinoza has declared God to be "the Supremely True" —that truth is involved in His being—we begin to ask ourselves whither we are now tending? Are these prophets, with their vivid imaginations, in any sense the utterers of the will of this supremely true God, or are they directly contradicting it and mocking it? Before we can find a satisfactory answer to this question we must consider how Spinoza treats the very solemn subject on which he next enters. "What do the sacred books import when they affirm the Spirit of God to have been infused into the prophets—that the prophets spoke by the Spirit of God?"

Imagination the source of prophetical conceptions of God.

68. The result at which our author arrives upon a long examination into the different uses of the word *Spirit* is, that these expressions respecting the infusion of the Spirit "signify nothing more than that the prophets had a singular and extraordinary virtue and cultivated piety, with very great constancy of mind, and that thereby they had a perception of the mind or judgment of God; for we shall find that the Spirit of God denotes in Hebrew as well the mind as the judgment or sentence of God, and therefore that the law of God, because it unfolded the mind of God, is called the mind or Spirit of God; therefore the imagination of the prophets might, with equal justice, be said to be the mind of God, and the prophets be said to have had the mind of God, inasmuch as through their imagination the decrees of God were revealed. And although on our mind also the mind of God and His judgments are inscribed, and consequently we also (to use the Scripture expression) perceive the mind of God, nevertheless, because the natural knowledge belongs to all, it is not so highly esteemed by men, as I said before, especially by the Hebrews, who reckoned themselves above all other men, and were wont to despise the common opinion." No passage can be more instructive than this. The prophets had the Spirit because they were remarkably good men. How, in conformity with the doctrine of the *Cogitata Metaphysica*, did they get the goodness? What *was* the goodness? Nay, the question forces itself upon us,—were they not positively *bad*—much worse, much more impious than other men,—if they made this use of their imagination? Were not they deliberately deceivers of the people? Were they not wanting in the one quality which we have discovered to be inherent in the Divine Nature? The resolution of these doubts does not turn upon the meaning of the word Spirit. Let it be mind, breath, or what you please, the honesty or dishonesty of the men who claimed it will be the

Spirit.

Virtue or piety.

The natural knowledge contemned.

Whence came the goodness?

Was it not badness?

The Christian idea of the Spirit who spoke by the prophets.

Exclusiveness and universality.

same. It may, however, greatly affect the ultimate decision of the questions which Spinoza has raised,—whether we are or are not able to say that God gave a Spirit of Truth to his prophets, and that this was the same Spirit who at Pentecost claimed the thoughts and tongues of men of all kindreds and tribes as His own. At every turn we perceive how deeply the relation of the common to the special is involved in the discussion; how justly Spinoza complains of his countrymen, as the apostles do, for despising other men; but how impossible it is for him to read the Scriptures, which he desires to examine so impartially —simply reporting what they said themselves—except under the influence of his early impressions. The broad *promise* to Abraham, which lies beneath the whole record,—In thee and thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed,—escapes Spinoza, or is passed over as insignificant. At the same time we perceive continually the exclusiveness of the Jew re-appearing in the philosopher. He does not despise the uncircumcised; but the stupid crowd of human beings take their place. They *ought* to know that their natural light is as great as that of any prophet; but as they do not, he scorns them as no prophet would have dreamed of scorning them.

Certainty.

Moral security.

Inclination to justice.

Prophets, how deceived.

The prophet's temperament or education determines his conclusions.

69. The question how the prophets acquired a sense of certainty respecting their revelations gives rise to a long discussion. Their imagination being the main instrument of their discoveries, they cannot have the same security as we have for those truths which are discovered by scientific insight or "natural light." It is, says Spinoza very characteristically, a moral, not a mathematical security. It is derived,—1. From the great strength of their phantasy, which brings objects before them as clearly as we see them when we are awake. 2. From some divine sign. 3. From their minds being disposed to the right and the just. Spinoza affirms the last to be the principal secret of their certainty. He quotes the words of Moses, which declare that signs and wonders may be granted to the false prophet as well as to the true. He maintains that signs were necessary for Chenaanah, who was trying to deceive the people, and were not necessary for Jeremiah, who was foretelling the downfall of Jerusalem. And he says that God would never deceive a true man—that only those were deceived, as Ezekiel says, who had idols in their hearts. Nevertheless, he affirms that the revelations to the prophet depended upon his temperament and upon his own opinions. These he brought with him—these varied not only his style of writing, but his understanding of any communication that was made to him. His joy, his sorrow, all the different modes of his mind and body, were continually affecting his judgments and his teaching.

Hence we are told it is the idlest fancy that we are bound to accept his messages, either respecting scientific matters or respecting the nature of God, as if they were authoritative, and our own reason must bow to them. They are all so coloured by the previous conditions and circumstances of the speaker—these conditions and circumstances are so much the essence of prophecy, so far as it differs from the natural light—that we are entirely excused from regarding them except as means whereby an ignorant people were induced to be more obedient and devout than they would have otherwise been. Every thoughtful reader will perceive that in these statements Spinoza has an evident advantage over those who treat the personal feelings, experiences, struggles of the prophets, as if they were nothing—who forget that they were human beings—who look upon them merely as utterers of certain divine dogmas, or as foretelling certain future events. He has a right to say that such persons overlook the letter of the books, while they profess to honour the letter; that they change their substance, while they think that they are taking them just as they are. But no real devout reader of the prophets ever forgets that they are men. Their human feelings, sufferings, rejoicings, are parts to him of the divine revelation. The struggles of the prophet with his own evil—the consciousness and confession that the vile is mixed with the precious—help more than all formal teaching to show him and us how the higher mind is distinct from the lower, as well as how the one is related to the other. We see how the prophet arrived at a certainty about the divine will and purpose through the very doubts and contradictions in himself. The prophet leads humble students, through the experience of the like doubts and contradictions in themselves, to the like certainty. They arrive as distinctly as Spinoza does at the assurance of a divine ground of all their thoughts and life. But they *prefer* a moral to a mathematical certainty—a certainty which will connect itself with their own life and history, and with the life and history of their fellows, to a mere recognition of an absolute Being, deep and true as that recognition is.

Use of prophecy, for whom?

How far the acknowledgment of moods of minds is justified by Scripture.

His character and feelings instruments of the revelation.

70. The next chapter, "On the Vocation of the Hebrews, and whether the gift of Prophecy was peculiar to the Hebrews," opens with a very true and grand sentiment. "The true felicity and blessedness of each man consists in the simple fruition of good; not in the rejoicing that he alone, and to the exclusion of others, possesses that good. For he who counts himself more blessed because it goes well with him only, and not with others, or because he is more blessed and more fortunate than others, is ignorant of true felicity and blessedness; and the gladness which he derives from this thought, unless it be a mere puerile glad-

True felicity in possession, not in exclusion.

ness, has its source in envy and a bad disposition." Having defined generally what he understands by the direction of God, the help of God, internal and external, and the election of God; having referred all these to those universal laws which express the divine will of God respecting every creature, he goes on to inquire what could be meant by the peculiar election of the Hebrew. He arrives at the conclusion, which we might anticipate, that the Hebrews excelled other nations in this only, that they were fortunate in those affairs that appertained to the security of life, and that they overcame great dangers mainly by the external help of God, but in other things were equal to the rest of the nations, and that God was equally propitious to all. "For, in respect of intellect, they could not have been favoured above others, seeing, as it has been shown already, that they had very vulgar thoughts about God and nature. Neither could more than a very few of them have been elected in the sense of having greater virtue and a truer life than others. Their election, therefore, and their vocation, consists merely in the temporal felicity and advantages of their empire. Nor do we see that God promised to the patriarchs or their successors anything besides this. Yea, in the law nothing else is promised as the reward of obedience, save the continued good fortune of their empire, and the other blessings of this life; and on the contrary, the greatest discomforts, and the ruin of their empire, for obstinacy and the breach of the covenant." Here we come to what seems to us the true test of Spinoza's doctrine. If the relations of man with man are merely outward; if they have been found by the experience of the world to be easy of discovery and easy of observation; if the common feeling of mankind has recognized no connection between man and some power above man; if there has been no bad government and tyranny in the world, and no superstition sustaining the bad government and tyranny; or if the supremely veracious and good God of whom Spinoza speaks has left His creatures to all the falsehood and evil which have sprung from these causes; *then* we confess we are utterly unable to account for the election of the Hebrews; *then* their influence, and the influence of the books that contain their history upon mankind, appears to be the most inexplicable of all facts. We do not say this simply in reference to Spinoza. His language about the motives which are set before the Jews by their legislator, and respecting the mundane character of the whole economy, is scarcely stronger than that which has been used by many Christian divines for the purpose of exalting the new covenant above the old. The radical principle of both is the same, though the polemical objects of the writers may have been most different. Both tacitly assume the life and policy of nations to be altogether earthly and vulgar. And

Election of the Jew, what it means.

Not intellectual or moral,

But political.

Politics assumed to have a material ground.

Spinoza not a greater disparager of the Jewish Commonwealth than many Christians.

How they confute themselves

Spinoza's proofs of the Divine impartiality derived from Scripture

each, it seems to us, in doing so, refutes his own characteristic maxim. The philosopher is unable to explain the common instincts of mankind—that witness of the human heart and reason in all lands, which he would set up against the peculiar privileges and polity of the Hebrews. The other reduces into a shadow and a fiction that Christian Church which he would represent as superseding and overthrowing the ancient Israel. After all, the Scriptures themselves furnish Spinoza with his most satisfactory arguments, that God held communication with other people as well as the Jews; that He did not contemn other people for the sake of the Jews; that He did not punish their transgressions less than those of other people; that He did not design to save them from any of the natural consequences of their own transgressions. All the passages which he produces to this effect are very excellent *argumenta ad hominem* when his opponent is a Jew, pleading that there was some special virtue in his own nation, or some special favouritism towards it. They are very much what Justin or any Christian father would have used for the same purpose. But they embarrass, not strengthen, Spinoza's plea, so far as it makes a formal separation between the outward and the inward, the good things which the Israelite enjoyed by the external gift of God and the good things which belonged to him as one of the human race. They only seem to us to show, what all Spinoza's other inferences from the old and the new world also show, that the life of a nation is the divinest of all gifts, and that those who have sought to disconnect it with the life of man, or the life of God, have always failed, and must always fail.

Law.

The necessity of nature

Positive law.

71. The following chapter, "On the Divine Law," is very important both for the philosophy of Spinoza and for the whole subject. "The name law," he says, "absolutely taken, signifies that according to which every individual, or all, or some of the same species, live under one and the same determined principle. This law depends either upon the necessity of nature or upon the pleasure of men. A law depending upon the necessity of nature is that which necessarily follows from the nature of the thing to which it refers. That which proceeds from the pleasure of men is that which men lay down for themselves and others, that they may live more safely and comfortably together. For example, the law that all bodies, when they impinge upon other bodies that are less than themselves, lose as much of their own motion as they communicate to the others, is a universal law of bodies, following from the necessity of nature. The law that a man, when he recollects one thing, straightway recollects another that is like it, or which he had seen at the same time with it, is a law which necessarily follows from human nature. But

Instances.

Man, a part of nature.

Law in its human sense.

The Philosopher and the Legislator.

The Divine Law, what is involved in it.

The Hebrew law has the signs of a human, not of a Divine law.

that men should yield up, or be forced to yield up, that portion of right which they have from nature, or should bind themselves to a certain method of living, this depends upon the pleasure or decree of men." Of course, Spinoza is bound to acknowledge, according to his fundamental maxims, that all things are ultimately determined by the universal laws of nature; nevertheless, he draws this distinction for two reasons, which he sets out somewhat more elaborately and less clearly than he is wont to do. The upshot of them is, that man, being a part of nature, exists under the laws of nature, but that the universal consideration about fate and the concatenation of causes is not sufficient to explain the formation and arrangement of our thoughts about particulars. Here, then, comes in the scope for human will in devising laws. Law, however, he thinks, has been rather applied by metaphor to natural things. The notion of it as a mode of life which a man for some end prescribes to himself or to others is the primitive notion. Adopting that sense, we can understand how a man who knows for what end he lives frames his law with a view to that end. The love of God is the supreme blessedness of the creature. The man who seeks that end shapes his life with a view to it; casts aside the fear of punishment, the desire of pleasure, fame, &c., as interfering with it. But legislators, seeing that the majority of the subjects have no such end, very wisely set before them inferior ends, terrifying them by penalties, stimulating them by the hope of secondary rewards, that they may keep them in tolerable order and may prevent them from interfering with each other. What then is the Divine Law, and in what sense is the law of the Hebrews to be called a Divine law? The Divine law, properly considered, is,—1. Universal; 2. Demands no historical records, seeing that it is derived from common notions and significations in the man himself; 3. Demands no ceremonies or actions which, being indifferent, are made good or evil by mere institution; 4. "Its supreme reward is the knowledge of God Himself, and the love of Him in true liberty with a firm and constant mind; its supreme punishment, the privation of this love and knowledge, and fleshly servitude, or a fluctuating and inconstant mind." To settle the second point, he proposes to inquire,—1. Whether we can by natural light conceive God as a legislator prescribing laws to men; 2. What sacred Scripture teaches concerning light and this natural law; 3. To what end ceremonies were instituted; and 4. What is the benefit of knowing sacred histories and believing them? He proceeds, as we might expect, to argue that the law which is set forth in Scripture speaks to men as the ordinary legislator speaks to them, by fears of punishment and hopes of reward; that God is

The higher law recognized.

presented to them as a prince or legislator, because they were not able to perceive His being as an eternal truth involved in the very nature of things; but that, nevertheless, there is a distinct recognition of natural and eternal truths in Scripture; that Christ and his apostles treat these as being superior to all outward laws; that St. Paul, especially in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, recognizes a revelation of God's being and nature to all men, and describes their great punishment as being that they were given up to their own lusts and ignorance.

Ceremonies and history.

Work and qualifications of Moses.

Ceremonies merely to enforce obedience in the minutest points.

Christian ordinances.

72. The following chapter is on the reason why ceremonies were instituted, and on the faith of history,—why and for what ends it is necessary. Our readers will imagine for themselves what the course of Spinoza's argument on these points is. He quotes those passages from the prophets which show how far they prized justice, truth, mercy, above ceremonies; how scornfully sometimes they speak of sacrifices; how little Christ cared either to abolish the law of Moses or to introduce any new laws; how entirely he was the asserter of the moral or natural law. Thence he proceeds to show that the Jews, when they came out of Egypt, were no longer held by the laws of any other nations, and therefore they might have made new laws for themselves at their own pleasure; that they were totally incompetent for such a task as this; that Moses, therefore, "because he excelled the rest in divine virtue, and persuaded the people that he had it, and proved it by many witnesses, on the strength of that divine superiority, constituted laws, and prescribed them for the people, taking, however, very great care that the people should do their work not so much from fear as of good-will. The object of the ceremonies was to remind a refractory people that they were not their own masters, but were dependent on the will of another; that they could not plough, sow, reap, eat, drink, shave their beards or their heads, rejoice, or, in one word, do anything, save according to rules and commands laid down in their laws. Nor was this enough; but they must have on their posts, on their hands, and between their eyes, signs which should always remind them of the obedience that was demanded of them." Their ceremonies, therefore, he concludes, conduced nothing to a divine or blessed life, but had relation only to the government of the Hebrews, and to the outward conveniences of the body. With respect to the universal ceremonies of the Christians, which are supposed to have superseded these, Baptism and the Eucharist, he thinks that if they were instituted by Christ or his apostles, which he cannot clearly make out, they were established merely as external signs of the Catholic Church, not as having any holiness in themselves. Then, as to the worth

Histories, their insignificance.

of the sacred histories, he admits that they impress upon the minds of the common people that which they might not arrive at by the natural light; but that their worth is as instruments which lead men to the higher and more radical knowledge, and that those parts of them which do not conduce to this end may be reasonably neglected.

Apparent coherency of Spinoza's doctrines.

Inconsistencies in them.

Is the light dependent on God, or He upon it?

How the difficulty is met.

Idea of a Mediator.

73. All these propositions, it will be perceived, hang very naturally together. Given any two or three of them, we can arrive without much difficulty at the rest. At the same time each new stone which is put into the building leaves the reader with an impression of its compactness and solidity. This impression is weakened by two reflections,—1. There is a practical confession in all Spinoza's language, that the *natural light* does not of itself lead us to the belief of a Being who can do those things for men which yet the experience of men proves that they require should be done for them. Help for these must be sought in some men of unusual gifts and virtues, who contrive arrangements for their fellow-men which, however far from that which the philosopher wants, are yet exceedingly desirable and necessary for them. Are these very wise and excellent men a set of angels or genii, who act independently of *the* Being? Is Spinoza going to lead us back into the superstitions against which he more than any man protests? 2. With this observation is involved the second of which we spoke. Is God dependent upon the natural light? or does it merely discover Him to us? Spinoza is continually hovering between these two beliefs. The latter is his genuine inward belief. God is before the light, the source of the light. But when he is occupied with his negative argument, with the process of overthrowing the traditions of his fathers, the other unconsciously becomes uppermost. The light in man, which at times we take to be utterly subordinate, nay, which, if we gave some words that we have quoted already their full force, might be supposed to have no relation whatsoever to the divine and infinite light, starts into a fearful superiority. It seems to govern, not to perceive. We are far from wishing to press either of these points for the sake of grounding on them a condemnation of Spinoza. They are of far greater value, it seems to us, as illustrating a difficulty in his position—a difficulty which very frequently besets our own path—and from which it seems to us that nothing but a full acknowledgment of a revelation of God to a creature who is formed to receive such a revelation, can remove. No man was so eager to get rid of the idea of mediation as Spinoza. No Christian advocate has ever done so much to illustrate the meaning and the necessity of mediation. At one time

the gulf seems impassible between the divine and the human region. At another time they seem to be merged into one. In each case the very results which Spinoza dreads most are continually threatening us. The old forms of divided intermediate worship are seen stalking in the distance, ready to spring up and overwhelm us; or customs, laws, ceremonies, become portentously powerful, just because there is nothing to connect them with a divine economy, because they must be taken as substitutes for its divine principles and rewards.

Miracles.

74. The opening of the next chapter, "On Miracles," throws great light upon the whole subject. "As men have been wont to call that science which surpasses human apprehension, divine, so they have been wont to call the work whereof the cause is generally unknown, divine, or the work of God. For people in general think that the power and providence of God then is most clearly manifested when they perceive something to happen in nature which is uncommon, and contrary to the opinion which they have formed from custom concerning nature. And in no way do they think that the existence of God may be more clearly proved than from this, that Nature doth not keep her order. Wherefore they deem that all those set aside God, or at least the providence of God, who explain events and miracles by natural causes, or try to understand them. They suppose, that is to say, that God is doing nothing as long as Nature is moving on in her accustomed order, and on the other hand, that the power of nature and natural causes are idle so long as God is acting. They imagine, therefore, two powers distinct from each other, to wit, the power of God and the power of natural things, which power they suppose to have been determined by God in a certain manner, or as most now-a-days express themselves, to have been created by Him. But what they mean by either nature or God they know not, except that they assume the power of God to be a sort of regal government, and that they attribute a sort of force and impulse to nature. The common herd, therefore, call the unusual works of nature miracles, or the works of God; and partly out of devotion, partly out of the desire of opposing those who cultivate natural sciences, wish to be ignorant of the causes of natural things, and delight to hear only of those things which they least understand and therefore most admire." He goes on to attribute to the Jews a wish to get rid of natural causes, that they might confound the heathens, who worshipped the sun, moon, water, air, &c., and might convince them that all these were weak and inconstant powers, which were under the dominion of the invisible God. "Finally," he says, "the folly of common people supposes nature to be so limited that it feigns man to be the principal

The rare identified with the divine.

The vulgar assume two co-existing powers, God and nature,

And exclude God from the common operations of nature.

part of it." Here undoubtedly is the strife between him and the opponents whom he despises. Spinoza the philosopher has many grave and well-supported charges to bring against the common herd, or the multitude. But the common herd or multitude has this charge to bring against Spinoza—one to which he proudly pleads guilty. He does *not* deem man to be the highest part of nature, or to be above nature. This is the cause of the protest of human beings against him and the natural philosophers. They do feel and know that they have something in them which is higher than sun, moon, or stars. They cannot and will not submit to give up this sense of their own greatness. If the greatness is mixed with littleness, if their sense of a relation to that which is higher than themselves mingles strangely and confusedly with subjection to things lower than themselves, might it not be worthier of a philosopher to show them the cause of this confusion, and to point out some way out of it, than to call them hard names, and at the same time to rob them of that conviction which, if truly reverenced and educated, might be the means of raising them above the errors which alone make such names applicable? For ourselves, we are quite ready to learn of Spinoza not to despise natural agencies, not to think that the order of nature in the least interferes with a continual divine operation. But we must claim, with the common herd, to have our human rights recognized. We must protest with them that man has a dominion over nature which he cannot abdicate, and which it is not for the honour of the eternal and immutable God that he should abdicate. In that hint which Spinoza has thrown out about the bearing of Jewish miracles upon the heathen mythology is contained, we conceive, a great truth, imperfectly and unfairly stated, which the rest of this chapter illustrates, and which demands some solution that Spinoza did not discover. His great knowledge of Scripture enables him to show how much the Hebrew writers dwell on the fixedness of God's order; how little it was in harmony with their purpose to make interruptions of it the test and proof of divinity; how they warned men against the use of miracles which might lead to this result. Should not such passages have led him to ask himself whether some other purpose than that of accommodating themselves to the prejudices of the vulgar, which prejudices they were continually outraging, may not have been present in those signs and wonders which they wrought? May not these have been witnesses, as he himself hints that they were, of a Being whose mind does not change as the appearances of physical objects do change, as the heathens supposed the minds of their earthly gods to change? But men exhibited these wonders: what right could *they* have to declare

The dignity of man set at nought by Spinoza.

The contempt of the philosopher inhuman.

The people wiser than he is.

Spinoza proves from the Bible that its writers do not value miracles as interruptions of order.

Men might bear witness,

such a Being? No right at all, assuredly, if the powers they exerted were not real powers, if they were not the powers of Him who is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. If they were trifling with these, or pretending to have them when they had them not, they were cheats and liars, like every other enchanter or magician. But whether they *must* have been so because they were men, this is the whole question. On this question, it seems to us, Spinoza takes the degrading side—that which lowers man to nature, and therefore obliges him to become an idolater; and that the common herd of men show, amidst all their perplexities, that they are feeling after that God whose offspring they are, and are craving that He should come forth to own them as His offspring, not merely as the creatures of His hand. In this way the belief of the miracles recorded in Scripture is not for us a contradiction of science, but an acknowledgment that God has met the wants of men, and raised them to the position in which alone science becomes possible for them.

by their acts, of an unchangeable God,

Unless man is cut off from God.

75. This struggle of the philosopher with the vulgar—this incapacity of doing justice to human feelings and necessities, even when he desires it most—this obligation to believe that the wise man sees only what is common to all, and yet that he must hold himself aloof from his fellows, and must be as unlike them as possible—comes out very strikingly in all the chapters wherein he discusses the books of Scripture, the Word of God which is implied in these books, the simplicity of the Scriptures, the relations of faith to philosophy, and of reason to theology. In this last chapter he examines the opinions of Maimonides, the Jewish rationalist, who would have brought Scripture to the test, and of Alpakhar, who would make reason bend to Scripture. Both doctrines are summarily dismissed; that of Maimonides with most contempt. Reason and theology have nothing properly to do with each other. The Scriptures are meant to make men obedient who cannot use their reason. Prophets and apostles spoke to ignorant masses. They set before them just so much respecting the nature of God as was necessary to keep them respectable and in good order. It was not the real nature of God, as that is apprehended through demonstrations by the wise. It was a certain popular nature, such as can be set forth in figures to the apprehensions of the people. The philosopher cannot dispense with such lessons. He has nothing to substitute for them. His own are of an entirely different kind. It is very foolish if he tries to remould them according to his notions—to assume that which is said literally was not meant literally—that corporeal emblems may receive a metaphysical sense. But, on the other hand, he is not the least bound by anything he finds in Scripture. He may take

Contradictions inevitable from Spinoza's point of view.

See c. vii., *De Interpretatione Scripturæ*, and the four which follow; c. xii., *De Scripturæ s. est verbo divino*; c. xiii., *Simplicitas s. s. ad Praxin*; c. xiv., *Fides et Philosophia*.

Reason and Scripture opposites.

The teaching of Prophets and Apostles.

The Philosopher, how he is to deal with the Bible.

it or leave it according as it agrees or disagrees with his higher intuitions. For his own life he does not want it at all, however much he may recognize it as expressing fragments of truth, as containing, mixed with baser matter, a Divine Word.

Spinoza resembles Romanists and many Protestants in his feelings about the people.

His treatment of Scripture inseparable from his idea of politics.

He was obliged to account for the influence of the Scriptures while setting at naught their principles.

The politics of Spinoza, how explained.

76. Here is an adjustment of the claims of philosophy and theology very different from Bossuet's—different from that which any Protestant would be disposed to accept. And yet, perhaps the idea of Spinoza, that theology is to enforce obedience upon people who are not capable of perceiving truth, may have been working almost equally in the minds of Catholic and Protestant divines, and may be at the root of many of their skilful apportionments of provinces. That Spinoza put that highest which, as he supposed, brought him into direct contact with truth, and paid only a distant and courteous homage to that which was to assist in forming men into quiet citizens and shopkeepers, was not altogether unnatural. If theology cannot act upon politics otherwise than he supposed it to act; if policy is the kind of science which he took it to be; if the main occupation of the philosopher is with the laws of nature, and man is for him only a part of nature; we cannot see how any conclusions respecting the Scriptures are possible except those which he adopted. In that case a reconstruction of the Jewish Scriptures, such as he attempted, is clearly necessary, To one looking at them from his point of view they can be nothing but a collection of fragments, so heterogeneous, so incompatible with any coherent or reasonable principle, that the wise man must emancipate himself from their influence; and yet so remarkable for the influence which they have exerted, that he must by some means, and under all possible difficulties, set himself to account for it. The task will require the utmost stretch of ingenuity; the materials will often prove utterly intractable; but he must do his best, trying to deduce the facts from the documents, after he has assumed a ground altogether unlike that which the documents assume, after he has brought the facts under a law which they do not recognize, and which contradicts the one that they do recognize. This is the labour which Spinoza has imposed upon himself in the remaining part of his treatise, when he lays down his scheme of government and society, and then interprets the republic of the Hebrews according to that scheme. It is, as we think, the critical part of the book—that which brings the rest of it, and all Spinoza's philosophy, to the test. But not only Spinoza's. Many of our most plausible and popular notions are thrown into the crucible as well as his. The politics of Spinoza have all that harmoniousness which can be imparted to politics by a man contemplating them as a system—all that impartiality which they can derive from the condition of a man who is a

wanderer on the earth, with no real attachment to any soil or any tradition. That condition gives them a deeply mournful interest in our eyes. It explains the kind of longing look which he turns so often to the "old clothes" which he has cast aside. It explains why the only genuine aspiration which he has about the institutions of the land in which he is a sojourner is, that they would allow him and other philosophers to have free scope for thinking and speaking.

Laissez nous faire his only demands of a government.

See Letters xxxiii. and xxxiv., between De Blyenberg and Spinoza, Opera, vol. i., p. 545.

77. It would be easy to startle our readers by quoting passages from Spinoza's chapter "On the Foundations of a State," concerning the natural right of men to do what they like; to indulge their appetites to the utmost. Such language led one of his correspondents to accuse him of levelling men to the condition of beasts. He answers the charge very indignantly, affirming that no one has spoken more strongly than he has done of the life according to reason,—the life in which the brutal appetites are restrained, and the man knows and loves God—as the only true life. He was justified in saying so. And yet the complainant had an excuse for his opinion. He had been used to consider the law of nature as something which restrains the inclinations of nature. Spinoza uses it as if it were the power or liberty to indulge those inclinations. Moreover, our philosopher had used very strong words about men being a part, and a very small part, of nature. He affirms with vehemence here, that if we understood the whole meaning of nature, we should see why men were permitted, according to its laws, this unbounded license. Finally, he will not tolerate the opinion that the laws of nature are not the laws of God. From these *data* it is not wonderful that De Blyenberg arrived at the inference which his friend so eagerly and with so much sincerity rebutted. Those who know only a very little of the history of philosophical inquiry—a little of the perplexities of their own minds—will be aware what mists hang about this word *nature*, and how frequently those mists grow thicker in the effort to disperse them. We are not disposed to repudiate Spinoza's assurance that he was trying to translate St. Paul's expression into other language, "*I was alive without the law once;*" and, "*Sin is not imputed where there is no law.*" We do not like the translation. It seems to us to omit some all-important elements of truth which St. Paul did not omit. But so far as it merely conveys the impression that law must be brought home to the mind of man in some other way than it can be brought home in a state of nature, before he has any clear consciousness of wrong-doing, Spinoza may be uttering a proposition which is confirmed by experience, and which we all need to remember.

Why Spinoza seemed to reduce man to the level of the beasts.

The Law of Nature.

The word Nature

Spinoza's appeal to St. Paul

78. But what is the next step? How do men pass out of this

Spinoza's Republic, how it resembles that of Hobbes.

Tests of a government.

Spinoza fonder of democracy, than Hobbes.

Powers of the state.

natural condition? Is it a passage into greater freedom or into greater bondage? Here begins our State. The difference from the Malmesbury State is rather accidental than essential, except that the difference of *colouring* often marks the difference in the mind of two artists more than the difference of form, and so far cannot be called accidental. Spinoza and Hobbes were as unlike in the starting point of their convictions as any two men could be. They were unlike in their education. They were unlike in their circumstances,—one being a discontented Englishman in the time of the Commonwealth; the other a refugee in Amsterdam, grateful for the protection which a republic afforded. But there was a point at which their minds met, and at which they proved themselves to be contemporaries. The State is for Spinoza, as for Hobbes, a refuge which men invent for themselves from the alarming natural rights which they find that each one of them is as much disposed to exercise, and is as much able to exercise, as another. Each man, according to Spinoza, as well as according to Hobbes, surrenders a portion of his rights against his fellows, that his fellows may not assert their rights against him. What is the most useful form of government for this end—how much of license it may permit, how much it may check, for the sake of preserving the society from falling to pieces—is the only question for either. The *feeling* in Hobbes is always for the greatest concentration. The State is a leviathan. The feeling of Spinoza is for a more natural play in the different limbs of the body politic. A democracy is for him not merely the beginning of government, but the consummate form of it; because he supposes, in spite of the old cases of Anaxagoras and Socrates and the recent examples of Remonstrants and Contra Remonstrants, that on the whole it is more likely to leave opinions alone. The ultimate end of a State, he says, is not dominion, but liberty. Nevertheless, a surrender of natural rights to the supreme authority, wherever it is vested, is involved in the idea of existence in a State. The State determines for each citizen what is right, what is wrong; what should be done or left undone. The State appoints what is needful in order to keep up the habits of obedience in those who are subjected to its control. The State presides over religious as much as civil matters.

Hobbes and Spinoza find the like difficulty in managing the Bible.

79. All the ingenuity and courageous dogmatism of Hobbes could not hinder him from appearing awkward and sophistical when he tried to reconcile his theory of society and government with that which represented God as constituting the family; God as forming the people whom He had delivered from bondage into a nation; God as Himself governing it, whatever subordinate instruments—priests, kings, prophets—He employs; God as preparing them for the manifestation of a divine king-

dom wherein men should be governed by a Father, be united to each other in a Mediator, by an indwelling Spirit. Spinoza is still more embarrassed, precisely because he has more sense of a divine economy, and is less able to divest himself of early associations. The strange dream of a people persuaded by their lawgiver to regard God as their King, and to bind themselves under a covenant to Him, has to be maintained under all difficulties, that he may show how peculiar the Hebrew commonwealth was; how little it can be a model for other commonwealths; and yet what lessons it may teach them respecting the dangers of monarchical, still more of priestly or prophetical, usurpation. Having once got rid of the primary idea of the Jewish State, he could have no difficulty whatever in disjoining its history from the history of all other nations. If the Lord was not actually its King, but was only made its King by an agreement which must have been the most fictitious, the least stable, of all agreements; if kings, priests, prophets were not responsible to a higher ruler, who actually called them to account for their forgetfulness of the duties with which he had entrusted them; the whole record must be that of different officers scrambling for authority over a very degraded race. The witnesses of the Bible respecting the degeneracy of all orders, and the punishment which they brought upon themselves, may all be quoted as proofs, and will in that case *be* proofs, that the whole experiment was a failure, and that the Hebrew polity is a beacon to all after generations how they permit the theocratic idea to mingle in any degree with their conception of society. Unfortunately, it does mingle and will mingle with the conception of every society; and in no one would it be more certain to mingle than in a society of which Spinoza was the priest and augur. For the philosopher to be confessing God as the origin of all life and thought, and for that God to be excluded from the government over human beings endued with life and thought—in the transactions which most occupy and absorb them—is a contradiction which every day's experience must make more palpable. But let not the truth be concealed, which we have so often had occasion to bring forth in this sketch, that the utter perversion of the theocratic idea in Catholic and Protestant Europe was forcing this contradiction upon the minds of the men of that age, as the continuance and aggravation of the same perversion has been forcing it on the minds of men in the times that have succeeded. One cannot read the eloquent and effective protest against intolerance, whether it proceeded from Roman hierarch or Calvinistic preacher, which concludes this tractate of Spinoza, without perceiving what had warped his judgment respecting the life and

Spinoza's work.

He draws out the lessons from Jewish history, c. xviii., *Dogmata Politica Ex. Rep. Heb.*

What the history becomes in his hands.

The theocratic idea.

It must enter into a society formed by Spinoza.

Why he dreaded it.

Spinoza's final chapter, cxx., *De Libertate docendi.*

Romish Theocratists.

Calvinistic Theocratists.

Cry against both.

The State invoked as a helper against them.

Criticism of documents.

The documents are changed by the previous opinions of the critic.

Consequences.

history of his own land; what had hindered him from accepting it as a light by which to read the history of all lands. Those who professed to assert a universal kingdom of God over men had practically denied His government and presence; had enthroned popes, priests, doctors in His place; had maintained that monarchs and republics were responsible to them—that they were to all intents and purposes irresponsible. They had shown by their acts that they felt there was no Lord over them; that they were left to manage the world as they liked. And the Calvinists, who had borne a noble protest for the real dominion of God against these usurpers, were in their turn striving to establish an ascendency of preachers more narrow, less learned, less humane than those of the old hierarchy. That there should be a cry loud and deep against each kind of tyranny from those who looked out upon the universe, who looked in upon themselves, and who felt how little they could learn of either from those who professed to have the key to both, was inevitable. That they should turn to statesmen as protectors against the arrogance and pretensions of churchmen, conscious all the while how frail that protection must be; that in taking this course they should invest States with a most dangerous supremacy just at the moment when the proclamation, *L'état c'est moi,* was going forth from the great ruler of the age, the one who most represented its tendencies; that their plea for the freedom of philosophers should therefore have been something very different from a plea for the freedom of men; this was natural. The treatise of Spinoza exhibits one phase—to us a most striking phase—of these perplexities and struggles. In it they are more indissolubly connected than in any other work with those questions of our day, which some fancy can be settled by a mere criticism of documents. Willing as Spinoza was to enter upon that criticism, able as he was from his Hebrew lore to conduct it, he yet shows clearly that the previous conceptions of the critic must determine his method, and therefore his conclusions. He cannot examine the statements of the writers upon whom he is to pass judgment, as they stand. He must remould them before he investigates them. The evidence of this necessity is all the more strong, because Spinoza certainly addressed himself to the Scripture books with a resolution to get rid of all glosses of interpreters, and to hear what they said. He has persevered far enough in this intention to make many of his observations of great value in correcting the Jewish and Christian Rabbins, who have forced lawgivers and prophets to repeat their sentiments. He has done more. He has not seldom brought the thought of God's continual presence, which is the inspiring one of lawgivers and prophets, close to us, while those who speak with more apparent reverence of lawgivers and prophets have put it far from us. But his notion of man as a part of nature—of natural laws as the only adequate expression of the mind of God—is so directly the reverse of theirs, that when he intends to treat them ever so fairly they undergo a transformation in his hands. He cannot approach them without compelling them to deny their own principles, without imputing to them a dishonesty of which he does not in his heart imagine them to be guilty. If we, who take them in their direct, obvious sense, think we have an advantage over him, we should use it to show that, by acknowledging God to be indeed the King and the Deliverer whom the Scriptures represent Him to be—by acknowledging the Jewish records to be the true exposition of His mind towards the nations of the earth—we can protest more zealously and effectually against all who have set themselves up to enslave the bodies and spirits of men, under any pretext, than he could do; that we are *not* compelled to ask one form of despotism to counteract another; that we *are* bound to welcome every instrument which has ever contributed or does contribute to the establishment of moral or physical order, to the overthrow of moral and physical oppression, as God's instrument; that we look for a complete revelation of Him, which shall make order and freedom entirely triumphant, and shall destroy whatever has divided them, or robbed mankind of either blessing.

Duty of those who dissent from Spinoza's conclusions.

They are pledged to be stronger assertors of liberty than he is.

80 Had we been left to deduce our inferences respecting the ethical doctrines of Spinoza either from the *Cogitata Metaphysica* or from the *Tractatus Theologico Politicus*, or from a comparison of the two, we might have been much perplexed. We should have felt ourselves obliged to accept the testimonies respecting his life as conclusive that he did not desire any relaxation of the moral code which is recognized amongst Christians, for his own sake; we should have welcomed his abiding sense of the presence of a perfectly true Being as that which upheld him; we should have joyfully remembered the words which declare the knowledge of God and the love of God to be the highest of all rewards. And however difficult we might have found it to connect the truth of God, on his hypothesis, with the truth of men, —however much we might be distressed by finding that the most excellent men in the old time—those to whom he attributes the formation of enduring polities, and those whom, in some sense, he recognizes as instruments of revealing God, had, in his judgment, tampered with truth,—we should, nevertheless, have supposed that in some way or other his conceptions of general morality were not affected by these historical opinions, and that when he had scope to explain himself clearly and satis-

Transition to the *Ethica* of Spinoza.

The previous books might not be decisive as to his moral creed.

His life an element in the question.

Many reasons for judging him favourably.

His severe logic.

Ethica ordine Geometrico demonstrata, vol ii., pp. 37-300.

Spinoza announces his own results.

Mathematics emancipated from history.

Michelet.

factorily, he would show that none of these consequences, which looked so inevitable, were really visible to his intellect. We own that to entertain this hope in the case of a man so rigidly consecutive and logical as Spinoza, so little scared by results, would have been difficult. But the motives to entertain it are very strong for those who feel real affection towards him, and who are suspicious of their tendency to misrepresent and misunderstand a man hostile to some of their own dearest convictions—busy in overthrowing the records which seem to them every day to offer greater proofs of their divinity. But Spinoza has not put us to this trial. His ethical doctrines are not to be gathered by inference, or by the setting of one statement against another. In a book which was published after his death they are set forth with the greatest precision, in the strictest sequence. We do not guess—we know—what were the ethical maxims which he believed to follow inevitably from his belief in God as the substance, from his denial that man is more than a part of nature. We are not now to learn how the doctrines of Descartes respecting the Being of God or the order of nature may be demonstrated geometrically. We are to ascertain what doctrines concerning the life of man necessarily spring from the doctrines, divine and natural, of Spinoza himself. We are not now confused by the intermixture of the history or the popular notions which philosophers are to tolerate, but to despise. We are in their own pure region of Mathesis. What, then, are to be our guiding stars in this region? How are those stars to show us our way through the thickets and over the dreary deserts of the earth? How are they to make us discern and enjoy its verdure? We have endeavoured to show that nothing can be less reasonable than the charge of Atheism which was brought against Spinoza by his illustrious brother Cartesian. We have even acquitted him of Pantheism in the usual (or heathen) sense of that word. We are not disposed to retract anything that we have said in his favour. But if we had nothing but the ethics of Spinoza to guide us in our conclusions respecting him—and if we did not hold that his old Jewish faith was stronger than his philosophical opinions for himself, as well as for us—we might easily yield to the opinion expressed by a modern historian, who has certainly none of Malebranche's Christian prejudices, in these fierce words,—"*Tout à l'heure dans cette Hollande Protestante en lutte avec la France Catholique, va s'ouvrir pour l'absorption commune du Catholicisme, du Protestantisme, de la liberté, de la morale, de Dieu, et du monde, le gouffre sans fond de Spinoza.*"

81. The first part of the *Treatise on Ethics* is of course con-

Part I., De Deo.

Liberty involving necessity.

Cause not deduced from effects, but effects from cause.

Necessity of things implied in God's nature.

The causa immanens

cerning God. Spinoza could begin from no other foundation. If we merely gave the definitions with which he opens, our readers would accuse us of repeating what we have told them already, when commenting on his Cartesian *Principia* and his *Metaphysical Meditations*. They would still find him talking of Essences and of Existences, of Substance, of Attribute, of Mode; of God as the absolutely infinite Being—that is to say, "a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses an eternal and infinite essence." There is nothing in this which we do not look for. Nor shall we be surprised at his definition of liberty. "That thing is to be called free which exists from the necessity of its own nature alone, and is determined to action by itself alone. A necessary thing, on the other hand, or rather that which exists under force, is determined by another thing to be and to work in a certain definite manner." That eternity means existence in itself, which cannot be explained by duration or time, we also know. Possibly none of the axioms will strike us as very startling. The most important are these three: "Given a determinate cause, the effect necessarily follows. Conversely, if no determinate cause is given, it is impossible that the effect should follow. The knowledge of the effect depends upon the knowledge of the cause, and involves it. Whatsoever can be conceived as non-existing, its essence does not involve existence." But when we have advanced a little way, we come upon these propositions,—"No substance can be conceived except God. Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be, or can be conceived, without God." And this corollary from the seventeenth proposition,—"That God alone is a free cause; for He alone exists from the sole necessity of His nature, and acts from the sole necessity of His nature." In a scholium to this corollary Spinoza rejects the notion that God is a free cause because he could have produced other things than those which he has produced. He affirms that infinite things have proceeded in infinite ways of necessity from the supreme power of God, or His infinite nature, and that they follow each other by the same necessity, just as it follows, from the nature of a triangle, from eternity and to eternity, that its three angles should be equal to two right angles. He therefore expressly denies intellect or will to God in any sense in which we understand intellect or will. He affirms, in the eighteenth proposition, that God is the immanent cause of all things, but not the transient. Under the twenty-ninth proposition, which denies that there can be any contingency in the nature of things, but that all are determined to exist and work in a certain way by the necessity of the divine nature, he places a scholium which formally explains his *Natura Naturans* and

Nature producing and produced.

Final causes rejected.

Natura Naturata. By the first he means that which is in itself, and is conceived by itself—that is to say, God as the one free cause. By the second he means all which follows of necessity from the nature of God, or from any one of the attributes of God. In the thirty-first proposition he lays it down that the intellect in act, whether it be finite or infinite, as well as will, desire, love, &c., belong to the *Natura Naturata*—not to the *Natura Naturans.* The thirty-second proposition affirms that will cannot be called a free cause, but only a necessary. In a corollary to this proposition, he declares that will and intellect bear the same relation to the nature of God as motion and rest, and must be determined by God to their being and their work, just like all natural things. The thirty-third proposition says, that things could have been produced in no other way, and in no other order, by God, than they have been produced. He denies that this doctrine imputes any imperfection to God; it is His perfection which forces us to affirm it. The thirty-fourth proposition declares that the power of God is the very essence of God. With these maxims to start from, he proceeds to sweep away all notions of final causes as interfering with the absolute being and absolute nature of God, and as limiting His power. To suppose Him acting with a view to some end which we call good, is entirely to limit His power, and to bring Him under our conditions. We assume that He has created all things for the good of man, and man to worship him. We ascribe to Him our notions of good and evil, merit and sin, praise and blame, order and confusion, beauty and deformity. We determine by ourselves what He is, who alone has determined what we are.

Spinoza's starting point.

Catholic Christians not at war with Spinoza's primary assumption.

82. Some who will perceive whither propositions of this kind must lead, when a system of ethics for human beings is grounded upon them, will take a preliminary objection to Spinoza's method. They will say that it would have been safer and wiser to have begun from the ground of fact and experience, to have seen what is demanded for us by our own necessities; then, if need were, to determine what are the duties which we owe to God, or in what relation we stand to Him. To suggest such a course as this is simply to say that Spinoza should not be Spinoza—that he should discard the primary principle of his philosophy. Those who believe in a revelation at all events cannot complain of him for resting human morality on a divine basis. They must rejoice that he should make the experiment; if it fail it may teach us more than many successes. Michelet has told us that Catholicism is swallowed up in the abyss of Spinozism. He may mean by Catholicism the doctrine of authority, whether biblical or ecclesiastical, as the ground of faith. *That* he may suppose to have been merged in the belief that the

existence of God is implied in the being and reason of man. But the Catholic, whencesoever he derives his belief concerning God, surely holds that *what* he believes underlies man and the universe. No father or schoolman would have dissented from that opinion. Or the historian may mean by Catholicism the Catholic faith of three persons in one Godhead. Catholicism in this deepest sense would be lost in that absolute idea of Godhead, excluding all relations, which is set forth in the first book of the *Ethics*. But the power of contrasting that idea with this negative absolutism—of showing what is involved in each, and what are the necessary deductions from each—may be just what the Catholic faith needs, in order that it may not be drowned either in *this* gulf or in the gulf of mere human decrees and traditions. Spinoza may help us more than all its advocates, by making us feel what are its distinctions, what is its unity, how the first involves the second. And the comparison of his method with its method may illustrate the defects of mere mathematical demonstration—the worth of an historical revelation—far more clearly than any reasonings which remove theology from the region of certainty to the region of probability, and at the same time change history from a living record into a set of formal propositions.

Only as a denier of persons is he hostile to them.

God and the world.

83. What Michelet says of the world and God being lost in this same bottomless pit, may seem to contradict our remarks respecting the conscientious effort which Spinoza made to separate the Creator from His works. That remark still appears to us correct, although it is evident from the passages we have just quoted, that Spinoza is obliged to represent the *Natura Naturata* as the express image of the *Natura Naturans;* nay, to treat the one as only not identical with the other. One who holds the Catholic faith would say, of course, that such an express image is demanded by the very nature of God. He would say that the world or nature takes the place, in the doctrine of Spinoza, which the absence of the only begotten Son has left void. He would affirm that a deep and logical thinker could find no refuge but in such a substitution, even though it led to the sacrifice of the very idea which was most sacred in his mind—even though God and the world were thus, as the French historian says, lost in each other, or in that which might become the negation of both. We have seen how, in the fourteenth century, men deeply penetrated with Christian ideas, and exhibiting an elevated Christian practice, might, while meditating upon the absolute ground of things, approach the borders of such a negation as this. Some of the most devout contemporaries of Spinoza, male and female, were not seldom upon the edge of it. If Spinoza approached it, not through sentiment,

How Spinoza is obliged to confound them.

How we may do him justice while we escape the confusion.

The forms of human excellence in the divine nature.

The divine unity.

but in his stern mathematical career, under the joint influence of theology and physics, of the old Hebraic lore, of the modern Cartesian lore, a Christian surely need not wonder, and has no right to blame. He may be very thankful for another warning respecting himself, another aid in apprehending the inner sense of that creed to which he has given his nominal adherence. For if he accepts that faith in the old meaning which was given to it by the fathers of the Church, he will be able to do full justice to the fear of Spinoza, lest in attributing final causes to the acts of God, we should be the inventors of those causes, and should deduce them from our own special occasions. He will do justice to Spinoza's desire, that all that has been created should be traced to the mind of God, working from itself, unfolding its own perfections. But he will find in the satisfaction with which a Father beholds a Son, and sees His own perfection in him, that which makes it at once unnecessary and impossible to look for any external motive acting on the divine nature, foreign to the divine nature itself. And instead of being compelled to seek in man those standards of goodness or beauty, of truth, of love, of praise—which are then transferred, as Spinoza complains, to the divine nature, to its great confinement and degradation—he will seek in that nature all these forms, and he will expect to find that in some way the image and likeness of them should be exhibited in the nature of man, who has the perception of them, and only in a secondary and subordinate way in the nature of those things which have not the perception of them. If he accepts the doctrine of the old creed concerning a Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, in whom they are One, he may feel that he is realizing the unity of the Godhead in a more perfect sense than Spinoza could realize it while he was contemplating a mere abyss of Being; and that he is also learning how it is possible for these divine forms of excellence to be imparted to a voluntary and intelligent creature—how it is possible for that creature to enjoy the state of a moral being—how it is possible for him, if he fell from that state, to be raised again.

Pars secunda, De Mente.

84. "The Nature and Origin of the Mind," which is the subject of the second part of Spinoza's *Ethics*, has been discussed already in the *Cogitata Metaphysica*. But the language there was so much affected by the writer's desire to separate the idea of God from all human associations and limitations, that we are startled when we find ourselves at once called upon to recognize the mind of man as only one side or form of the infinite mind. Can this, we ask, be the same teacher who used that strange phrase about the dog in the zodiac? It is the very same. Nor is he conscious of the slightest hostility between the two statements. One is for him the consequence of the other. The

The finite a part of the infinite.

The idea of mind and body equally in God.

Physics driving out politics.

infinite must not be controlled by the finite; the finite cannot be divided from the infinite. Whether Spinoza succeeds in emancipating the infinite from the finite; whether he is able to discover the real union between them; are the questions which this part of his *Ethics* specially forces upon us. Man, we must always remember, is not to have any special honour. He is a *res cogitans*. He thinks God's thoughts. But body is a *res extensa*. That expresses God's essence considered as a *res extensa*. The idea of all things whatever must be in God. And as Spinoza again and again reminds us, it is this idea which we must identify with His nature, separating from it all those conceptions of power and will which the vulgar derive from the analogy of earthly kings. No hint is so pregnant as this; none deserves so much careful meditation. This horror of "vulgar" analogies lies at the very root of Spinoza's ethics, politics, theology. It is connected with the great movement of his time; with the triumph of the physical over the human, the result at once of the opening of avenues of sense which Bacon and Galileo, all the thinkers of the seventeeth century—Descartes not the least—had promoted, and of the despair that had been left on men's hearts by the result of a thirty years' war—an English parliamentary war, a French Fronde, all ending in a grand Monarque. Spinoza, better than all his contemporaries, expresses the effort of the age to reconcile physics and metaphysics, by casting politics and humanity into a lower sphere.

Thought and space.

Hâc de causâ ipsos rogo ut lento gradu mecum pergant.

85. For Spinoza's tendency is not like his master's, to glorify mind at the expense of the body, and of all things that do not think. He is strictly impartial. He has great respect for the thinking faculty; it is one of the attributes or perfections of the Infinite Being. But he has an equal respect for space, and all the different modes of it. The Infinite Being contains all these. It is a great blunder in ordinary teachers that they speak of one as binding the other. They are bound together by a law. Both are subject to certain natural laws. To represent either as having certain interests against the other is altogether a perversion of fact and principle. The operations of the mind, the object of the mind, the limitations of the mind, must all be determined by its connection with the body; mind and body alike, not one more than the other, being referred to the Infinite Nature. Hence follow several propositions which we will give in the words of the author. First, we will set down this corollary, at which he says he is aware that his readers will stumble, and will require breathing time before they proceed. "Hence it follows that the mind of man is part of the infinite intellect of God. And therefore, when we say that the mind of

The thoughts of man the thoughts of God.

The object of the mind, the body.

Various and distinct perceptions, to what they are owing.

Connection of memory with bodily conditions.

Order of the affections and of the intellect.

man perceives this or that thing, we say nothing else than that God—not in so far forth as He is infinite, but in so far forth as He is unfolded through the nature of the human mind, or in so far forth as He constitutes the essence of the human mind—has this or that idea. And when we say that God hath this or that idea, not only in so far as He constitutes the nature of the human mind, but also in so far as He hath the idea of some other thing along with a human mind, then we say that that human mind partially or inadequately perceives that thing." Having defined single things to be those things that are finite and of a determined existence, he affirms that that which constitutes the actual being of the human mind is nothing else than the idea of some single thing existing in act. Next, that the object of the idea which constitutes the human mind is body, or a certain mode of extension existing in act, and nothing else. He then lays it down that by "how much any body is more fit than others to do many things at the same time, or to suffer many things at the same time, by so much is the mind of that body fitter to perceive many things *conjointly*. And by how much the actions of any single body more depend upon itself alone, and other bodies less co-operate with it in action, by so much is its mind fitter to understand things *distinctly*." He then enters at some length into the composition of bodies, and the way in which many elements may form one individual nature, intimating, but not developing, the thought that "all nature is one individual, the parts of which, *i. e.*, all different bodies, vary in different ways, without any change of the whole individual." He proceeds to account, with much ingenuity, for various processes of imagination and memory, through the conditions of the particular bodies with which the mind is associated. "Memory," he says, "is nothing else than a certain chain of ideas involving the nature of things external to a particular body; and these ideas follow each other according to the order of the affections in that body." He guards against the notion that he means, in the first part of this definition, the ideas which *explain the nature of these things;* for these would explain the affections of the particular body itself as well as of all external bodies. And in the second part of the definition he distinguishes the ideas which are determined by the affections of the body from those "which take place according to the order of the intellect, whereby the mind perceives things through their primary causes, and which in all men are the same." This distinction must always be borne in mind whilst Spinoza is dragging us along through the consideration of these bodily and mental affinities. There are certain primary and universal principles which lie behind all these conditions, and which depend directly upon the divine nature. And hence arises his doctrine respecting the adequate or inadequate knowledge of the mind, and respecting the falsity of perceptions. All the ideas in God are adequate ideas. He takes in the whole idea of bodies and minds. Our minds arrive at the perception of other bodies and minds through the conditions and affections of their own bodies. This knowledge is inadequate and mutilated, but not therefore false. "Falsity consists in that privation of knowledge which inadequate or mutilated and confused ideas involve." The illustration of this doctrine introduces a topic which is more important than itself. "Men are deceived in that they think themselves free; which opinion stands in this alone, that they are conscious of their own actions, and ignorant of the causes by which they are determined. This, then, is their idea of liberty, that they do not know the cause of their own actions." This doctrine of the absolute dependence of man upon laws over which he has no control is that with which Spinoza winds up the intellectual part of his philosophy. He had told us before that he admitted choice as a fact. Now he tells us not only that we know nothing about the ground of that fact, but that it is of the greatest importance to remember that it is a mere fact of experience, and not a principle at all; that our actions and thoughts all follow an order which is prescribed for them, and which they cannot transgress. We must not leave this chapter, however, without observing that there is an important scholium on the fortieth proposition, "on those common notions which are the foundations of our reasoning," and on the origin of what he calls the transcendental or universal terms. In another he illustrates the different processes by which men arrive at common notions. Thus, three numbers are given to find a fourth, the fourth being to the third as the second is to the first. The ordinary tradesman, following a tradition or "vague experience," multiplies the second and third together and divides by the first. Another man arrives at the same conclusion from the doctrine of proportions. He perceives by a true reasoning what is the universal principle. But if I have the three numbers 1, 2, 3, given me, I perceive intuitively, without the vague experience or the demonstration, that six is the number I am in search of. Spinoza seems to intimate that this intuition, fully developed, would be the highest and most perfect science—the clear recognition of that law under which we exist.

Adequate and inadequate ideas.

Man subject to certain laws over which he has no control.

Common notions.

Science.

86. It is obvious that the idea of man as one of the things whereof nature is composed is at the root of all these propositions; his *differentia* being that he is a thing which thinks—a *res cogitans*. Here is excuse enough for Michelet's assertion that Spinozism, as it swallows up Catholicism, also swallows up Protestantism.

Man a thing.

The Protestant outraged.

What his protest is.

The person asserting himself.

For if we give the word any other sense than the mere technical sense which it has in connection with the Diet of Spires—nay, if we thoroughly investigate that sense—what is the Protest but against the notion that men can be ever treated as things—a protest that every man is a person, and can in nowise cease to be one? The crime of the Roman hierarchy—so the Protestants proclaimed—had been that it reduced men into things, that it took away from each man his own personal responsibility, his right to know how he could acquit himself of his responsibility. It was nothing to tell Luther that he was a thinker. He had found that out. It was his misery and torment. Oh that he could be rid of that curse! Oh that he could be one of the things about him—one of the cattle on the hills—the hired servant of his Father! This attribute of thinking was just that which gave him no rest night or day—which, to all appearance, would give him no rest for ever. Preachers of indulgences tried to ease men of this burden. They could not; he was certain that they could not; they were mocking human creatures when they attempted it. Men were persons, and only some message which came to them as persons, and which they could embrace as persons, was worth listening to. Such was Protestantism in its first condition; such has been its characteristic ever since, so far as it has retained any vitality. Its theological, moral, political significance perishes equally if the person sinks into the *res cogitans*.

How Spinoza may be a reconciler.

Man must be personal or impersonal as God is.

87. But this is another instance in which Spinoza offers at once the bane and the antidote, in which the extremity and the consistency of his dogmatism help to show us the deliverance from it. The destroyer of both Catholicism and Protestantism may be their reconciler; the rigid philosopher, better than the mild compromiser, may explain how each, in missing its own highest purpose—in being untrue to its own professions—has necessarily diverged from the other, has necessarily set itself at war with the demands of the human heart and conscience. The divine persons were lost in the divinity of Spinoza. The personality of man perishes in his scheme of humanity. But he is not merely negative. He believes God to be the ground of all things—God to be the ground of the thinking thing, as well as of all other things. Restore the divine personality, and Spinoza's own philosophy demands that the human shall rise with it. One cannot perish unless the other perishes. And since Catholicism has striven age after age to quench Protestantism, or human personality, in it own universality; since Protestantism has striven age after age to make its assertion of man's individuality the ground of all things; and since each has failed in these experiments—and

All and each. How they are to be harmonized. The entire humanity seen in a person. The body and mind imply a person. Sense of sin.

has approached nearer to suicide than to murder in making them—each may be very thankful for a mediator who, with whatever intention, interprets to each the might of its own principle, the secret of its own decay. Spinoza vindicates the truth that there must be that which belongs to man as man—a *human* intellect. He vindicates the truth that there must be that which belongs to *each* man; for each man has a body which affects and limits his intellect, and through which he becomes able to take account of other bodies. The whole of his discussion upon the human mind is an admission of these two great facts—an exposition of many of the subordinate facts which are involved in them—an attempt to reconcile them. A student should be encouraged to consider how far he has succeeded in this attempt; how far he has been able to account for the true and universal intuitions of men, by *identifying* their intuitions with the divine; how far he has been able to account for the errors and imperfections of human judgments by the conditions of the particular bodies through which they act; how far the truths which he utters on both these points require another truth to sustain them, and to prevent them from clashing, the moment they are brought to any practical tests. To us it seems that unless the perfect humanity is confessed as dwelling in a person who is perfectly divine, no full justice is done to the first principle, and that when that confession is made each man is necessarily contemplated as a person acting through that mind and body which have been entrusted to him. The respective functions of mind and body will be then fully recognized. It may be fully granted that these follow a predetermined order, and that neither can break through that order for the sake of asserting its own separate rights without bringing in confusion. But then this confusion, when it is connected with the acts of a person, involves that sense of wrong, or evil, which Spinoza, losing sight of the person, is obliged to deny.

De affectibus. Denunciation of human nature.

88. The third chapter, "On the Affections," illustrates, even more strikingly than the one upon the mind, the principles of the whole book; illustrates also, we think, the remarks which we have just made. The chapter opens with a preface, in which the author complains that men generally denounce human nature as something exceedingly contemptible or exceedingly wicked. The more opprobrium they heap upon it, and all its appetites and affections, the more, they think, they are pleasing God. Some ethical writers—the illustrious Descartes among others—had looked at the subject from a different point of view. They had endeavoured to explain the affections by their primary causes, and to show how the mind may exercise an absolute dominion over the body. Spinoza thinks they

Attempts to glorify the mind at the expense of the body.

exhibited their own cleverness in these disquisitions more than they illustrated the principles of ethics. He can attribute nothing to a fault of nature. That is always one and the same. "The affections of hatred, anger, envy, &c., considered in themselves, follow from the same necessity as all other finite things; therefore, they may be traced to certain causes, and possess certain properties which are as worthy of our knowledge as the properties of anything which we delight most to contemplate." He means, therefore—however much the vulgar may protest—to treat of them in the same geometrical method which is considered appropriate to times, places, and bodies.

Is geometry available for ethical discussions?

89. To this mathematical *method* of Spinoza the moralist can find no other objection than one which would be common to him with every student of the living nature and properties of bodies. If the essence of the affections does not escape in the process of reducing them under definitions and propositions, by all means let that process be applied to them. Reasonable men would complain of it, not as too severe, but as failing in severity —as missing the very points which it ought to seize. That is the ground upon which the experimentalist has stood; that has been his reason for maintaining that a treatment which is adapted to the boundaries of things is not adapted to the things themselves. If Spinoza has discovered a means of avoiding that danger in this instance, the reasonings of the divine will not touch the form, however they may apply to the matter, of his statements. The second definition of action and passion may be a fair test whether he *will* avoid the danger. "I say that we *act* when something takes place within us or without us, whereof we are the adequate cause; that is to say, according to the first definition, when something follows, within us or without us, from our nature, which can be clearly and distinctly understood through that nature. And, on the other hand, I say that we *suffer* when something follows, within us or without us, from our nature, of which we are only a partial cause." A more elaborate or ingenious verbal definition it would be difficult to find. And that Spinoza has a right to call that which he can distinctly understand through his own nature, his act, and that which he cannot thoroughly understand through his own nature, his suffering, who that respects the liberty of speech which should belong to every citizen can deny? But whether action and suffering have not that in them which is not the least comprehended in this definition, and whether that which is excluded from it, and would be equally excluded from every definition, is not precisely that which the actor and sufferer, and, therefore, which the ethical philosopher has need to take account of,—these are questions we have need seriously to ponder.

Action and passion.

The definition somewhat too good.

Who acts and suffers

Some means there should be, one would think, of getting at acts and sufferings more directly than through an intellectual process. Spinoza himself must have wished for such means, since he is impatient of all doctrines which treat the affections merely as the servants of the intellect. May it be that "the thinking thing" cannot act and suffer just as men and women act and suffer?

Law of the affections.

Mind and body both divine attributes.

Will and appetite.

Joy and sorrow.

Hatred and love.

90. In fact, the affections are strictly bodily affections. Their characteristic is, that they increase or diminish, promote or restrain, the power of the body. There are ideas accompanying the affections. But the mind can do nothing to make the body move or rest, just as the body can do nothing to make the mind think. Mind and body are, in fact, one and the same thing contemplated under the attribute of thought or under the attribute of extension. All which propositions Spinoza does not merely enunciate, but illustrates at great length, and with much eloquent exposure of the absurdity of the common as well as the philosophical opinions which are at variance with them. The actual essence of each thing involves the effort to continue in its own existence. This effort, when referred to mind alone, is called *will;* when referred to mind and body together, is called *appetite.* There is no difference between appetite and cupidity "saving," adds Spinoza, "that cupidity is more commonly attributed to men than to brutes, because the former are *conscious* of their appetite"—a difference of some importance surely, but of less than we have been used to suppose, if the next proposition is tenable. "From all which considerations it is clear that we do not aim at anything, wish for anything, seek or covet anything, because we judge it to be good; but we judge it to be good because we aim at it, wish for it, seek or covet it." Having cleared the ground so far, it is a short step to the conclusion that joy expresses the passage of the mind into a higher state, when it "affirms" something of the body which adds to its strength or capacity; that sorrow expresses the passage of the mind into a lower state, when it affirms something of the body which lowers its strength and vitality; that joy and sorrow determine for it what is good and evil; and that all other passions, such as hatred and love, and whatever are compounded of these, are derived from joy and sorrow. Spinoza's remarks on the formation, modification, and exercises of these affections, are sometimes ingenious, quite as often puerile. As a definer he is less sharp and distinct than Hobbes; as an observer he is immeasurably inferior to Aristotle. We feel that when he leaves the absolute for the concrete, reason for experience, he is away from home, and has not the right use of his powers.

91. Without striving to discover any of the possible consequences of this theory, which will suggest themselves readily

Bearing of these doctrines on morality.

enough, and which various statements in Spinoza (especially that respecting the "confused ideas" of what is good or evil in the body) may much modify, we may find enough in this part of the treatise to warrant the suspicion of Michelet, that "*Morals*," in their ordinary sense, were not much safer in the hands of our philosopher than Catholicism or Protestantism. For manners, we generally assume, concern the relations of man to man in society, and must involve some inquiry into such relations. But these do not enter into Spinoza's speculation.

The fundamental relations of man to man do not mix with Spinoza's theory.

The facts that men are born into the world of certain parents, that they have brothers and sisters, that they may have children, scarcely seem to have occurred to him; at all events, he dismissed them as unworthy of any consideration, as only interesting to the vulgar. Woe to us if we make the remark in bitterness or scorn, and not rather with a sense of the profound sadness which there is in the spectacle of a man of genius—with much capacity for kindliness and sympathy—reduced to such a tribeless, homeless condition, that he can see no fellowship anywhere, except that which binds a thinking thing to a certain thing that moves and rests. By much that he says respecting this fellowship we may profit; and here, as elsewhere, one who adopts the creed which he rejected, or never embraced, has much to learn both from his affirmations and his denials—much from the coherency of his different affirmations and denials.

A Christian's view of human nature.

Those who hold that there is a Son of God who perfectly sets forth the Divine idea of humanity, and in whom it can be perfectly contemplated, will be less inclined than Spinoza to suppose that he honours God by disparaging that in which His glory is most shown forth.

What is implied in an Incarnation.

Confessing an incarnation, he will confess that an actual mind and body might be united to the Divine substance; he will not think that the mind is to be exalted against the body, or that any affections which properly belong to their union can be impure or evil. But believing that the perfect head of humanity felt for every human creature, and could not do otherwise if He was the perfect image of a being whose nature is loving, we must suppose that all affections which interfere with this perfect sympathy and fellowship are inhuman—are departures from the law of our kind, just as they are also departures from the law under which we exist by our relation to God.

The law of kind.

The fact of a perpetual tendency in men to such inhumanity is recognized by Spinoza as much as by any who use the language about our nature against which he protests. He attributes to the great majority of men confused and inadequate ideas respecting that which will benefit their bodies. These confused and inadequate ideas concern the law of their being—the law under which they exist. So far

The transgression of law by a person "*sin*."

Spinoza's services.

he and the Christian Apostle are agreed. But the Apostle supposes the transgression of the law to be by a person—calls it *sin*. The man has wandered from God. He has separated himself from his fellows. All differences therefore resolve themselves finally into this. We may be grateful to Spinoza for continually reminding us of it; equally grateful to him for pointing out the tendency of Christian divines to contradict their own special truth; to libel the humanity which they who affirm it to be represented in the perfect image of God are most pledged to honour; to deny the relation between each man and the common humanity which they who call the separation from it sin are most pledged to assert.

De Servitute Humana, De Libertate Humana.

92. The two chapters which follow are on "The Servitude of Man" and "The Liberty of Man." We might expect to find in them the decisive evidence for the last charge of the French historian, that human freedom is as much undermined by Spinoza as human morality. No doubt there is much in the opening of the first of these dissertations to confirm these fears. The boundary line between God and Nature, which has become more and more shadowy throughout this treatise, appears here to be abolished altogether. The words are used interchangeably. Again it is announced in the first definition, that "Good means that which we certainly know to be useful to us." Again this corollary is formally deduced from the fourth proposition, that "Man is necessarily obnoxious to passions, and that he must follow the common order of nature, and obey the same, and accommodate himself to it as far as the nature of things demands." Are we not then tied and bound to obey whatever are the strongest impulses of this nature of ours? Must we not love or hate just as the conditions of our body lead us in one way or other? No; strange as it may appear, we are to rid ourselves in this part of the treatise of those conclusions which seemed so formidable and irresistible in the last. An affection can only be controlled by an affection. We cannot bring in a mere notion of good and evil to bear upon it. We cannot bring thoughts of anything contingent or future to restrain present impulses. We cannot set the mind to control nature. But nature, being universal, demands the good of all in the good of each. We are not in harmony with nature—we have an inadequate idea of its requirements—we are, in fact, fighting against it, if we suppose that we can preserve our own being at the expense of the beings of our fellow creatures. So we arrive, of course by legitimate geometrical steps at these conclusions,—"That nothing is more useful to man than man; that men can wish for nothing more excellent with a view to the preservation of their own being,

"Æternum illud et infinitum Ens quod Deum seu Naturam appellamus," *Præfatio.*

Spinoza's corrections of himself.

The demands of nature.

The one body.

What ministers most to intelligence ministers most to the body.

Sans Joy and *Sans Loi* brothers.

The knowledge of God, the supreme good of man.

than that all may so agree in all things that the minds and bodies of all may compose, as it were, one mind and one body; and that all together may endeavour, as far as they can, to preserve their own being; and all may seek, at the same time, that for themselves which is the common benefit of all. Whence it follows, that men who are governed by reason can seek nothing for themselves which they do not covet for other men, to the intent that they may be just, faithful, and honest." For though we have seemed to disparage the mind, it turns out after all that that which conduces most to intelligence conduces most to the good of the whole man. It is his nature to seek this. And since, as we have seen, joy is that affection which contributes most to the strength and growth of body and mind, and sorrow to their depression, the highest amount of joy must be the best for the end of self-preservation. But this joy is interfered with by hatred, and all passions which sever us from our fellows, and is increased by anything that connects us most with them. By another route then we return to the old maxim of doing to our neighbour as we would that he should do to us. And since the knowledge in which perfection consists must have an exercise, we learn that the supreme good of the mind is the knowledge of God, and the highest virtue of the mind must be exercised in that knowledge. And since the servitude of man consists in his yielding to partial affections and inadequate ideas; and since the true freeman is he who, with great energy and effort, conforms himself to his reason, that conformity consisting in the pursuit of the knowledge and love of God; one hardly feels that this is the part of Spinoza's writings in which his Necessitarianism is most rampant, his enmity to liberty most conspicuous.

Spinoza's thoughts respecting humility and penitence.

Rejoice evermore.

93. But though an admirer of Epictetus might not be startled at these ethical results, a Christian believer, it may be thought, can have no sympathy whatever with them, inasmuch as Spinoza not only rejects sorrow from his circle of lawful affections, as one that necessarily lowers the perfection of the human spirit, but treats humility and penitence as signs of impotency. To dream of reconciling such opinions with the belief in a Man of Sorrows, in One whose perfection was identical with His lowliness, is obviously absurd. But it is not absurd to seize first upon those points of Spinoza's doctrine which as Christians we are bound to accept before we enter upon those from which we are equally bound to dissent. The Apostle who said, "Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say, Rejoice," would not have complained of his philosophical countryman for any part of the positive language in which he has expressed his conviction that joy is the proper element of man's existence, and that the high-

est joy will be in some sense the highest life. Nor would St. Paul have found any fault with the doctrine which is implied in all that Spinoza has said of joy being a common heritage, and of each man having so much less of it as he wishes to deprive his neighbour of his portion in it. And though he might not have spoken of men ascending to the third degree of knowledge (a phrase of Spinoza which will be intelligible from a passage in the *Ethics*, quoted in a former section), the writer who spoke of the spirit of man knowing the things of a man, and of the Spirit of God revealing the things of God to man, would have seen in the lessons of Spinoza respecting eternal things much that accorded with his own profoundest thoughts and most glorious aspirations. It could not have been so indeed—it would have been entirely otherwise—if certain words of the philosopher in his last chapter, wherein he seems to make the love of man to God not the correlative of God's love to man, had stood alone and unqualified. But almost immediately after, he affirms that the love of God for Himself is the only ground of the love of man to Him, and that this love of Himself, or, in other words, satisfaction with His own perfect nature, involves a love to mankind.

Proinde Mens quatenus æterna est ad illa omnia cognoscenda est apta quæ ex datâ hâc cognitione Dei consequi possunt, *hoc est ad res tertio cognitionis genere cognoscendum.*

The love of God to man.

Love essentially personal.

The ethics of Spinoza become transformed when this principle is admitted.

Return to the old theology.

94. Believing, as we do, that these statements express the most radical convictions of Spinoza's mind—those to which he would have wished all that is at variance with them to give way—it behoves us to consider what portions of his theory are incompatible with them practically, and therefore philosophically. Let any man try to make the love of that which is impersonal the object and aim of his whole being, and he will find that he is simply outraging his nature, that he is doing therefore precisely what Spinoza condemns theologians for wishing him to do. Rectify, then, these ethics, not according to some notion of ours, but so that they may not contradict themselves—so that they may be as consecutive as our stern geometrician wished them to be; supply that great gap which Spinoza himself mourned that he could not supply; insist—not that he should be able to explain the barbarous word *personalitas*, but—that he should admit into the idea of a Being whom he loves that without which love is a dream; and then see how all else in his system becomes transfigured. We may gladly admit his proposition, that the highest love of God is to His own nature; that He cannot be satisfied with anything less than that. But seeing that His nature is personal, we must demand that His highest love should be to a Person. And so that great idea of the old theology, of which we spoke before, the love of a Father for a Son in whom he sees His own perfection, reappears, and commends itself as a necessity to our minds. And the beautiful concession of Spinoza, that

love to men is implied in this love, and that men's love to God is the reaction of that, leads to that very truth of a meeting-point between Humanity and Divinity which he has been in vain seeking to banish from his speculations.

Human sympathy.

And then, that other doctrine of Spinoza, that any man who tries to separate himself from his kind, wars against that which is good for himself, is justified, not by some utilitarian experience, though the value of that may be fully admitted, but as he would have wished it to be, by the eternal principle upon which man is constituted. It cannot be otherwise, if he has a living and divine Head who sympathizes with all, who knows the mind of each, from whom the life of each individual is derived.

The Man of Sorrows.

But once assume this Head of humanity to be a Person, and can you avoid the supposition that He enters into the sorrows as well as the joys of each member of the race? Is it not destroying the very supposition of an universal sympathy to think otherwise? And if we were told that that sympathy had been actually expressed by entering into the nature of every human being, bearing the death of every human being, should we not say that this gave us a new insight into the divine perfection, such as Spinoza wished for, but of which his hard, solitary system is the denial? One thing more would seem to be wanting, that this divine humanity should be directed to the very purpose of redeeming men from that servitude which Spinoza laments as the condition of the great mass, of enabling them to enter into that freedom which he regards as the heritage of the truly rational man.

Necessity and freedom.

In that sense we may well reconcile his most vehement assertions of necessity with his doctrine of freedom; for we shall believe that God is the one author of freedom to man, and that man left without God is a slave.

The confession of a fall and a restoration necessary to the ethical truth of Spinoza.

And since the fact of this slavery is affirmed by no one more decidedly than by Spinoza; since our complaint of him would be that he makes the rational man so much the exceptional man, and thus appears to set at naught many of his own most distinct and favourite statements—we cannot see how he helps us to escape from the belief of a fall and corruption of man's nature; or how anything but the belief of a Spirit who raises men out of that fall and corruption, and enables them to be what they were intended to be, by giving them the power to struggle and to resist what degrades them, to aspire after that which elevates them, can satisfy the demands which he makes upon us in the grand conclusion of his treatise.

Conclusion of his treatise.

Therein he says, "If now the way that I have shown leads to these rewards seemeth to be very difficult, nevertheless it may be found. Difficult, indeed, it must be, because it is so rarely discovered. For how can it happen, if safety were near and could be found without great labour, that nearly all should neglect it? But all noble things are difficult, all noble things are rare." A grand conclusion we say; yet one in which nothing would be concluded, if a voice which proclaimed, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth to life," had not also proclaimed, "I am the way; I am the door through which every man may enter in and find safety."

Union of Divinity with Philosophy proclaimed by Spinoza, while he most appears to separate them.

95. This preaching tone will seem to many specially unsuitable in a commentary on the works of the Jew of Amsterdam. We believe it to be never more suitable than in such a commentary. Though he more systematically than any one has laboured to divide the provinces of the philosopher and the divine, assigning to the one the whole realm of absolute truth, assigning to the other the business of keeping ignorant and stupid people in obedience, he more than any man obliges us utterly to repudiate that arrangement, for the sake of his own sincerity no less than of ours. The principle from which he starts, that God is the ground of all things, cannot be more the principle of the philosopher than it is of the divine. The end which he proposes to himself, the knowledge and love of God, cannot be less the aim of the one than of the other. We must assume him to be, as he has been most unfairly and unrighteously called, a Mephistopheles whose whole aim is the mockery of human beings, if we suppose him to have trifled with this language, and not to have used it in the strictest sense. Giving it that sense, the very deepest mysteries of theology—all its practical relations to human life—present themselves to us. We cannot shrink from them; Spinoza felt that he could not. We have seen them all pass in review before him. No one, we think, has ever had greater excuse for being dissatisfied with the common faith of mankind than he had; no one ever applied himself more diligently, more ably, to discover some substitute for that faith, to connect the visible with the invisible world by some other links than that which the divine revelation proclaims to us. We know no Christian advocate who has done so much to make us seek in that revelation for the grounds of the duties of men to their neighbours and to God, of their ethics and of their politics.

The charge of mockery against him wholly unjust.

The result of his philosophy.

Politics of Spinoza.

96. A full criticism of Spinoza would include the political Tractate which was published after his death. Many illustrations of his ethics might, no doubt, be found in it; but after the attention we have given to the treatise which explains his view of the Hebrew polity, we have no excuse for dwelling further on this side of his mind. We cannot, however, take leave of him without observing again, that we look upon his political speculations as showing us why a philosophy which aspired to be all inclusive became narrow and denying. The

How they interpret the rest of his philosophy.

His great confusion.

The confusion of his time.

Questions about disinterested love.

The divine sacrifice.

impossibility of regarding the ordinary condition of human life, the government of human society, as having any interest for the Divine Being—the apparent necessity of supposing that any rectification of the actual disorders of the world must be the work of human agency—produced a confusion in him which it would not have produced in one who less resolutely and habitually traced every movement in the world and in man to the infinite and eternal. He did not wish to identify the infinite and eternal with the things which he saw; he struggled desperately against such identification. But there was no escape from it if the whole economy of man's life was so much lower and baser than the processes in the earth's womb, or than the movements of the planets. But how natural was the thought that it must be lower and baser! All men of all schools were hastening in the same direction. Bossuet could believe that all history was connected with the history of the Jews and of the Church. But what had the polity of the Jews and of the Church ended in? Whom did the great orator set before his hearers practically as the type of kings? And, therefore, to set that king above all the kings of the earth; to make him the king of kings was the effect of Bossuet's divinity. Fenelon might have dreams of a good government in the days of Ulysses; but it had apparently no relation to the life of Christendom. And, therefore, the business of a Christian was to dream of disinterested love, and to aim at self-forgetfulness. Spinoza, too, had his belief in disinterested love. It took openly the form of dissatisfaction with the history of his fathers, which seemed to represent Jehovah as acting upon men through their hopes and fears. If Fenelon and Bossuet had agreed to contemplate that Sacrifice in which they both believed, might they not have found a reconciliation of their own differences? The highest love manifests itself in stooping to the feelings and necessities of the lowest creatures, that it may raise them. If they had faithfully set forth that sacrifice as one for Jew, Turks, infidels, all men, might not Spinoza have seen in it the interpretation of his highest belief respecting the universality of the divine gifts, the perfection of the Divine Nature? Might he not have seen that the special polity of his nation was leading to the discovery of a ground on which a human polity, on which human life, may rest?

CHAPTER VIII.

LOCKE, AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

1. Few readers will suppose that the writers on Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are entitled to less honour, or deserve a more hasty treatment than those of the preceding ages. Most will maintain that they require to be spoken of at much greater length; that Locke ought to be at least as carefully handled as Aristotle or Aquinas; that Hegel should have a far greater space allotted to him than could be justly claimed by Descartes or Spinoza. It may sound paradoxical to say that this consideration has mainly determined us not to attempt more than a very brief indication of those who fall within the rich and populous period at which we have now arrived. If we attempted to preserve the same scale in speaking of them which we have thought suitable to the middle age, or to the age which follows William of Occam, we must, in fact, enlarge that scale enormously. The proportions of the near object would seem to be strangely contracted if they were only as great as those of the more distant. And the discretion of selecting and rejecting, which is tolerated and is acknowledged as necessary in the relation of what was thought and done in the times of old, is almost inevitably imputed to national or school prejudices when it is exercised upon Englishmen, Frenchmen, or Germans of the times in which we or our fathers have lived. The purposes of a manual, therefore, must be sacrificed, in order to maintain a reputation for consistency which would not be maintained after all, since, both in the number of the persons named and in the space allotted to each, there would be no fair measure between the different periods. If we add that many of our extracts and analyses must be made from English and French authors who are all accessible, and some of them familiar—that the extracts from, and analyses of, the illustrious Germans of the last and present centuries would be inevitably vague and unsatisfactory—and that eminent English, Scotch, and American historians of philosophy have supplied these helps to our judgment of particular writers more copiously than we could hope to supply them, we have, perhaps, said enough to explain why we conceive that we shall be treating our readers more fairly if, instead of several bulky volumes, we offer them only

Why the writers in them must be noticed very briefly.

The other course would not be satisfactory;

And is quite unnecessary.

Objects of a manual to connect writers with society.

a few hints respecting Locke and his successors. But we must add this reason in addition, that our object throughout has been to show how the great social movements of the world have affected, have been affected by, the studies of the closet. A very rapid glance at the men who flourished in the time between the English and the French Revolution, and at those who have flourished since, may remind us perhaps better than an elaborate account of them and their writings could remind us, of the relations in which they stand to each other and to their respective centuries; of the great differences between those centuries; and of that which remains the same in all centuries.

John Locke, born 1662, died 1704.

2. The name of John Locke is one which Englishmen instantly connect with a Political as well as a Metaphysical Revolution; with a certain theory of government; with certain notions about toleration; with certain common sense views of Christianity; in general, with their own practical tendencies, as opposed to the scholastical tendencies of former days, and to what they hold to be the revival of these scholastical tendencies, mixed with other and more damaging accompaniments, in this age. These impressions will be admitted to be a little vague. It is desirable that they should be reduced to some order, and that Locke's place in reference to his predecessors, his contemporaries, and his successors, should be carefully ascertained. No better aid can be found by one who desires to fix that place than these words from the first chapter of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*,—"I thought that the first step towards satisfying several inquiries which the mind of man was very apt to run into, was to take a survey of our own understanding, examine our own powers, and see to what things they are adapted. Till that was done I suspected that we began at the wrong end, and in vain sought for satisfaction in a quiet and secure possession of the truth which most concerned us, whilst we let loose our thoughts into the vast ocean of *Being;* as if that boundless extent were the natural and undoubted possession of our understanding, wherein there was nothing exempt from its decisions, or that escaped its comprehension. These men extend their inquiries beyond their capacity, and letting their thoughts wander into the depths wherein they can find no sure footing, 'tis no wonder that they raise questions and multiply disputes, which, never coming to any clear resolution, are proper only to continue and increase their doubts, and to confirm them at last in perfect scepticism. Whereas, were the capacities of our understanding well considered, the extent of our knowledge once discovered, and the horizon found which sets the bounds between the enlightened and the dark part of things, between what is and what is not comprehensible by us, other men would, perhaps, with

Essay on the Understanding. Works, folio 1714, vol. i., p. 3.

The wrong end.

Study of the understanding by the understanding.

less scruple, acquiesce in the avowed ignorance of the one, and employ their thoughts and discourses with some advantage and satisfaction in the other." Every admirer of Locke will agree with us that this passage expresses the inmost thought of the man, and the design of the book which he was writing. We apprehend that there may be found in it the key to his thoughts on all subjects, the secret of his English popularity, the cause of the acceptance which he ultimately obtained from the class which was at first most opposed to him, the main difference between him and all the schools of philosophers which had preceded him, the explanation of the fact that any reaction in their favour has involved a rebellion against him.

All previous philosophers occupied with Being.

3. Our present business is with this passage, so far as it refers to the inquiries which have occupied us hitherto. So soon as the Greek mind became reflective it began to search after the ground of things. Its early schools are often represented as impractical, though an immense amount of thought on all subjects, physical, human, and divine, was awakened in them. Socrates is said to have given philosophy a direction towards common life. He did so by teaching his disciples to seek beneath the numerous *opinions* of the Sophists for that *which is*. He directed them to look for a ground on which *they* could stand. So he came into collision with the religion of his day, as he had come into collision with the scepticism of his day. The various notions and conceptions of the gods could not be reconciled with his confession of a Being who guided and governed him. Those who attributed their own infirmities and evils to the gods felt that his morality was a condemnation of theirs. The study of Being was what Plato learned of his master. All his inquiries in all directions, ethical, political, dialectical, natural, are inquiries after being. Aristotle, departing from *his* master in that he substitutes happiness for being as the foundation of ethics, yet regarded *metaphysics* as identical with Ontology, or the science of Being. The schools, Latin or Greek, which were called Academics or Peripatetics, occupied themselves with a number of topics, discoursed about earth, and man, and the gods. They became, like the Sophists, professors of certain opinions on all those subjects. Only now and then did the belief dawn upon them; "Something *is*." Epictetus the slave wanted more than opinions to give him freedom. Marcus Aurelius the emperor wanted more than opinions that he might rule justly. Each confessed a deliverer and ruler of himself,—one whom the philosopher does not create, but finds to be near him. The Christian Church, which Epictetus did not acknowledge, and which Marcus Aurelius persecuted, could not stand in opinions.

Socrates emphatically the philosopher of Being.

Plato follows him.

Aristotle's Ontology

The later schools weak for want of belief in that which is.

Union of Jewish and heathen faiths.

It confessed the "I AM," whom the Jew had owned as the founder of his polity and his laws. The Platonism which is attributed to the Christians of the first age—which may be quite as truly attributed to the Latin Augustine as to the Greek Athanasius, to which each attained through tremendous struggles, internal and external, with Paganism and Manichæism—means this. The earnest inquirer could find no rest except in a Being who had all knowledge of him, and whom he might know. Whether this Being had revealed Himself to men in One of His own substance; whether His Son had taken flesh and dwelt among men; whether He had sent His Spirit to bind them into one; or whether He communicated Himself to the multitude through subordinate powers—the gods of the old mythology—while the sublimated philosopher might be absorbed into His essence; were the questions which Julian and the New Platonists debated with Athanasius, Basil, or Gregory, and which continued to be debated with more or less vehemence till the schools of Athens were closed, and the Church entered upon the second stage of its existence. Then it could tell men what they should think; then it could organize schemes and methods of thought. But the belief in an ontological science—in that science as *the* science—was ever interfering with the reverence for opinions, and therefore with the contentment of men in the decisions which enforced and consecrated opinions. The disputes respecting Realism and Nominalism—the changes of feeling and opinion in the Church respecting them—continually forced men upon the recollection that no sentences or notions about things can make them otherwise than they are; that to be or not to be is the question of questions. The entire victory of either party would have been less effectual for this end than the alternate successes of each. And when the balance, in the fourteenth century, had decidedly inclined in favour of the Nominalists, Occam considered that he was asserting the unchangeable principles of Theology against the fluctuating maxims of Popes and Canonists, while Wycliffe, and after him Huss, clung to the old Realism, because it meant for them the same assertion of that which is against that which seems right to this or that doctor or ruler. When Cosmo and Ficinus betook themselves to Plato and Plotinus in the fifteenth century, it was because they found in them a witness for eternal substance against the mere formalities of the intellect. When Luther forsook Aristotle and Aquinas for Augustine and St. Paul, it was because he could only find in the former certain propositions about man or God, and because the latter told him how God, the living Being, had actually revealed Himself to the faith and trust of men. Theology was for him the true Ontology. In the seventeenth century Descartes, hampered with no

Christian Philosophy turns upon Being.

Its antagonist.

The school ontology a protection against mere opinion worship.

Realism and Nominalism their connection with Being.

The fifteenth century.

The sixteenth century.

Descartes.

Spinoza.

sacerdotal data, abjuring the methods of the schools, starting from doubt, had yet affirmed the being of man to be involved in his thinking—the being of God to be implied in the being of man. And Spinoza, abandoning as far as he was able the maxims of his infancy, indifferent to the elder philosophy, refusing any control from the dogmas of divines or the records of Scripture, yet asserted as strongly as any of his predecessors that Being is the ground of all things, the goal of all thought.

General conclusion.

Locke's value not less for his exclusiveness.

His method deserves a trial.

4. All, then, the most energetic questionings of men, in every age and in every direction, had, according to Locke, "begun at the wrong end." From Socrates to Spinoza, nearly all searchers after truth, to whatever schools they might belong,—Pagans and Christians, Nominalists and Realists, Dogmatists and Sceptics, Catholics and Protestants,—had been losing themselves in an ocean of Being. Locke perfectly understood himself. He said this, and he meant this. And little as we may be inclined to accept so sweeping a decree—idle as it would be to have given a sketch of philosophical thoughts if they were so purposeless as he took them to be—we yet are bound to acknowledge that, if Locke had meant less than this—if he had been more capable of perceiving what his predecessors were aiming at,—he would have been less able to do the work which was given him to do—his influence upon after times would have been feebler and less beneficial than, in our judgment, it has proved. We do not commit ourselves to the opinion that all earlier inquiries had begun at the wrong end, if we allow that it was desirable just at this time that a course of inquiries should begin at the end which Locke deemed the only legitimate one. We may see good reason why, for the present, there should be no more voyages in the ocean of Being, —why men should busy themselves only with thinking about their own thoughts, or with trying to ascertain what regions could *not* be explored—into what deeps it was *un*safe to venture.

Objections which might be raised to it.

Dangers of thinking about thought.

5. No doubt, students in Locke's day might have raised these preliminary objections to the course which he recommended. They might say—(1.) That the process of thinking about thinking had been tried already. That the schoolmen had made manifold experiments in this direction. That the puerilities and bewilderments which Locke and others objected to them might be traced especially to that effort to "set the understanding at a distance and make it its own object," which he urged as a necessary, though a difficult operation. That the systems which most embarrassed investigations into nature had their origin in these reflex acts. That Locke, in suggesting these to his contemporaries, was undoing much of the work which Bacon had done for them when he taught them how they might look away from themselves, and enter into direct converse with the facts of the universe. That if

Dangers of negative dictation.

Dangers of separating the thoughts of philosophers from those of common men.

Probable fears.

the evils of such a scheme did not reappear in the old form of scholastical riddles, they would appear in some form probably more inconvenient, because more blended with the ordinary occupations of men. (2.) That a philosopher who undertakes to fix in what directions the understanding shall *not* move, what results it cannot hope for, would be sure, in process of time, to become a more dangerous dictator even than Aristotle, seeing that the laziness of men would welcome his decrees, and the public opinion of particular ages and countries would enforce them. That hence must arise great hindrances to inquiry and discovery, these hindrances being the more serious because the teachers who created them would never suspect that they were not the most passionate friends of enlightenment and progress. (3.) That if *philosophers* should be induced by Locke to abstain ever so carefully from enterprises in the ocean of Being, the *people* would not be moved by the same arguments to forego all their beliefs that islands of the blessed or islands of woe exist somewhere in this ocean. That there must begin again, under the new psychological regime, all the old contempt of philosophers for the people—all the old suspicion of philosophy by the people. That each would, for a time, civilly decline to invade the territories of the other. That soon each would discover such abstinence to be impossible, except on the condition of admitting their own maxims to be false. That the only end of this war must be a philosophical acceptance of all customary and traditional idolatries, or a popular atheism. Such anticipations would have had a warrant from the experience of the times previous to Locke; nor have they been confuted by the experience of the times subsequent to his. But there are certain considerations on the other side which might have occurred to a devout man at the end of the seventeenth century, and which, for us in the nineteenth, ought entirely to outweigh those which look at first so alarming.

Answers to these objections.

Inquiries about thought had become inevitable.

Demonstrations of Descartes.

Experiments of Bacon.

6. They are of this kind,—(1.) That the effort of trying to think about thoughts, however perilous, becomes necessary at certain crises. That such a crisis had certainly arrived when thinking assumed the place which it had assumed in the demonstrations of Descartes; and again when a man so able and profound as Spinoza had treated the thinker as only one of the things of which he thinks. That there must have been a continual oscillation between wild and extravagant dreams of what is implied in the act of thinking, and a very low estimate of the creature who performs that act, unless some one had arisen who was willing to strip off all assumptions about man and his capacities, and to begin the investigation of them and of him from the lowest point. That though Bacon, by directing men's inquiries towards physical studies, was a great and effectual protester against the

habits of introspection which had been the disease of schoolmen; yet that, in so far as he showed experiment to be the way of arriving at any certainty in physics, and denounced all anticipations of the results to which experiments would lead, he made it inevitable that the same method should be applied *mutatis mutandis* to every subject. That when Hobbes had declared all moral and political philosophy before the treatise *De Cive*, to be worthless and contemptible, he was sure to find numbers who would accept his decrees, not only on account of his great ability, and of the appeal which he had made to some of the strongest feelings which were then working in the minds of cultivated men,—dislike of Puritans, dislike of insurrection, dislike of priests;—but also because any writer who puts forth a strong assertion of which he is thoroughly convinced, and which can be embraced without much trouble and with some self-satisfaction by his readers, may count upon a large measure of sympathy. That no denunciations of Hobbes by clerical writers—no foolish attempts to harpoon the *Leviathan*—were the least likely to test the truth of his boast, or to shake the faith of his admirers. That nothing but an inquiry into the conditions and demands of the human understanding, and into the necessities of men as individuals and in societies—an inquiry conducted by those who had no prejudices in favour of old thoughts, all inclination towards the new—could determine whether Hobbes had solved the riddle of the universe, whether all beliefs which mankind cherished respecting their own freedom and their own destiny, so far as they were inconsistent with his, must be for ever abandoned. That if the philosophical movements of Locke's time pointed to such a recommencement of human studies as he suggested, it became still more necessary from the conditions of society, especially of English society in the same time. That there was a decided rebellion among the laymen of the upper classes, who aspired to be men of the world, against the clerical and collegiate lore. That these laymen had a strong suspicion that what the clergy affirmed to be sacred traditions were, for the most part, professional technicalities, which belonged properly to the cell and cloister, and which, when they were brought out of these, became a set of maxims, not without their use in acting upon the fears and hopes of the vulgar, but which would bear no tests such as men apply to the business of life. That nothing but a scheme of study which would give such laymen the fullest opportunity of proving the worth of their tests could determine whether any tests of another kind were needful, and what these might be. That the clergy and the men of the schools might be brought in the same way to a more clear apprehension, and even a stronger belief, of that which they called others to believe. That though many

Dogmatism of Hobbes.

All alike prove the necessity of a new beginning.

Temper of the times.

Laymen and churchmen.

Effects which such inquiries might have on both.

collisions might arise between these classes, and though each might often assume, in consequence, a merely defensive and argumentative standing ground, principles would be made manifest by their opposition which neither alone would have asserted or perceived. That, on the whole, there could have been no man so well qualified as John Locke to represent the best and accomplished part of the lay mind of England—to resist without violence or ferocity the clerical or university mind. That being bred among Puritans, mixing with the Shaftesburys and Pembrokes, trained in a college, essentially a man of affairs, free from pedantry, almost free from the affectation of despising pedants, a student of physic, but without the professional ties of a physician, without a tinge of fanaticism, cautious and reserved yet not diplomatic in his intercourse with other men, never pretending to understand what he did not understand, with just enough of humour to detect and expose those who made such pretensions, never positively denying that there might be a region lying beyond his horizon, very much disposed to think that it must be a region of mist and darkness, with a style and method of thought exactly fitted to express his sober, prudent, unimaginative character, thrown into circumstances personal and national that especially demanded such a character,—he had all the advantages, inward and external, which fitted him to be the first leader in a movement that would be carried on through great part of a century by men of several nations, differing from him differing from each other in opinions and dispositions, all with marked features inherited from him.

Locke the type layman.

His specially English character.

7. (2.) So in reference to the second point, it would surely have become a contemporary of Locke to reflect,—That no philosopher who appealed to experiment could foretell whither his experiments might tend. That Bacon had set aside the belief of Copernicus and Giordano Bruno respecting the relation of the earth to the sun as a mere speculation, a very short time before it was established by irresistible evidence. That in like manner each teacher who followed in the track of Locke might bring to light some fact respecting the nature of man which he had overlooked, or establish the significance of some which he had treated as insignificant. That if teachers should arise who would deem themselves his faithful disciples because they limited the scope of human knowledge and human hope more than he had limited it, nothing but good would ultimately proceed from their attempts—no principle which men have need of could be lost through the inability to discover it by a certain method—since it would force itself upon them in spite of themselves, and the confession of it would oblige them to reconsider their method, and would show wherein it was defective. That,

Locke could not dictate whither his experiments might lead.

Any way the result must be good.

on the whole, whatever fears those might entertain who suppose human inquiries to obey no law, to be subject to no guidance, those who trace a more direct divine government in them than in the course of the planets, will be certain that none of them could be spared, and that they must be working onwards to a blessed issue. (3.) In reference to the third point, one holding this faith would expect; That, in the ages to come, as in the ages past, great events in the history of mankind would compel philosophers to perceive how the questions which were agitating the minds of simple human beings were affecting *them*. That those who took least account of philosophy, or regarded it with terror, would be unconsciously occupied with its greatest problems. That a conflict might come which would bring metaphysics and the common life of peasants into an association which would startle philosophers and divines almost equally. That in this conflict might commence a new period for both—a period in which the disciples of Locke would have to ask what his cautions had availed,—

If there is a divine director of human thoughts, the people and the philosophers could not be able always to stand aloof from each other.

How they would be brought together.

> " Si tamen impiæ
> Non tangenda rates transiliunt vada,"

but when it might be found that there are compasses for navigating the ocean that he shunned, which those who knew them and affected to prize them had neglected.

Locke and Descartes.

8. The remarks we have made may, we trust, help to preserve the student from one or two mistakes into which he is liable to fall when he compares Locke with his contemporaries, his predecessors, and his successors, in metaphysical inquiry. It is a tremendous transition to pass from the *Treatise on Method* by Descartes, to the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. In the first they will find innate ideas assumed as the ground of all demonstration, the security for science as well as for faith. The overthrow of innate ideas is the starting point of Locke. That two men living in the same age, neither tied by traditions of the past, should have arrived by such cautious steps at conclusions so diametrically opposite, on what each regarded as a fundamental principle, is at first a most perplexing fact; nor can we calculate the numbers whom it has perplexed. But if we seriously consider Locke's primary conviction respecting the "wrong end" of human inquiries, we shall perceive that it was as impossible from his point of view not to set aside innate ideas as it was impossible from Descartes's point of view not to accept them as implied in the very act of thinking, in the very existence of a creature that can think. The reasonings of each are not plausible merely—not the result of the skill of clever special pleaders; they are the consistent vindications of two

Innate ideas.

The opposing methods.

How each may assist the other.

opposite methods, each of which appeared to its own champion the only possible method; each of which may hereafter be found indispensable for the needs of the student; each of which may lead to results which will test and confirm those of the other.

Services of Locke to those whom he attacked.

Locke believed that he was confuting Descartes when he proved clearly, and to the satisfaction of nearly all men, at least in our day, that statements such as "The whole is greater than its part," "Whatever is is," are no less propositions than any in *The Principia* or in *Euclid;* that propositions involve terms; that children and a multitude of men know nothing of terms and propositions. He believed that he was overthrowing Descartes, Spinoza, and all who had affirmed the nature and being of God to be implied in the thoughts of men, when he showed that there are savages who have no name which can be considered equivalent to our name for God, and possibly have no worship. He was in fact relieving both these doctrines, not only of irrelevant popular arguments which weakened their force, but of notions which had darkened the minds of the most eminent men who had defended them, and had perplexed some of their strongest and clearest convictions. Supposing these principles involved in the acts of our minds, they must be distinguished from the notions which we form about those principles, and from the modes which we take to express these notions. The distinction had not been clearly made. The refutations in Locke's first book helped to establish it. They could not have served that purpose if he had not resolutely set at nought all such principles, and undertaken the task of merely tracing the formation and growth of notions from their commencement in the impressions which are made on the senses.

Propositions cannot be innate.

The distinction.

Locke called a Philosopher of Sensation.

9. Next, if we accept the statement which we have founded upon Locke's own words, that his main purpose was to avoid all considerations that related to being, substance, first principles, as either existing in the mind or presupposed in its operations, we shall understand better on what ground he has been called a philosopher of sensation, on what ground he has been said to be the enemy of idealism. Each description has a good justification for it; each may lead us into strange mistakes if we adopt it carelessly. Since Locke's object is to trace our notions, opinions, judgments, to their beginning—since his method is wholly chronological—he must, of course, start from the first acts of a child; he must speak of seeing, tasting, smelling, hearing, handling, before he speaks of anything else. And since his purpose is to examine the understanding itself, he must contemplate the impressions made on the senses much more than the things with which the senses converse. Was there any novelty in this? That men see, smell, hear, taste, handle, was a truth

Ground of the statement.

Culture of the senses.

The Christendom idea of education

modified by his influence

certainly not unknown to former ages. It cannot have burst as any great revelation upon the age of the Stuarts. The power of the senses was fairly recognized by Charles II., was not undervalued in the literature of which Dryden, Congreve, Rochester, were the representatives. But the existence of the senses had never been recognized as directly connected with *culture.* The ground of that had been assumed to be that which is characteristically human, not that which is common to man with the lower animals. The study of words, the study of human discourse, the study of Mathesis, which involves certain laws of our thought, had become the foundation of Western education; this being regarded as the human culture which was only subordinate to theology or the revelation of God. Locke was not able to alter those long-established convictions which had moulded all the institutions of Christendom. But from his time the reasons for them have been continually disputed. Another method, another starting point of education has been proclaimed And much, we conceive, has been gained from the new doctrine, and from its collision with the old. The questions, what place the senses hold in the economy of human life, what treatment is most suitable for them? if not answered yet, at least have had a light thrown upon them for which we should be very grateful, and which Locke has been one instrument in obtaining for us.

Locke makes ideas his objects.

The mind observing the change in its ideas.

How it comes to believe in Power.

10. But for a reason we have given already, it would be a great error to imagine that Locke, when he claimed such serious attention to the effects of the senses, brought the *objects* of the senses more directly before us than previous philosophers had done. Because he sought to expel all belief in innate ideas, it has been hastily concluded that he has enabled us to contemplate the facts of nature without the bewilderment of intervening ideas. Any single passage picked at random out of the *Essay on the Human Understanding* would show how utterly untenable this opinion is. Take, for instance, this from the opening of the very important chapter "On Power," the twenty-first in the second book:—"The mind, being every day informed by the senses of the alteration of those simple *ideas* it observes in things without, and taking notice how one comes to an end and ceases to be, and another begins to exist which was not before; reflecting also on what passes within itself, and observing a constant change of its *ideas,* sometimes by an impression of outward objects on the senses, and sometimes by the determination of its own choice; and concluding from what it has so constantly observed to have been, that the like changes will be made in the same things by like agents, and by the like ways; considers in one thing the possibility of having any of its simpler *ideas* changed, and in another the possibility of making

that change; and so comes by that *idea* which we call *power*. Thus we say fire has a power to melt gold; *i. e.*, to destroy the consistency of its insensible parts, and consequently its hardness, and make it fluid; that gold has a *power* to be melted; that the sun has a *power* to blanch wax, and wax a *power* to be blanched by the sun, whereby the yellowness is destroyed, and whiteness made to exist in its room. In which, and the like cases, the *power* we consider is in reference to the change of perceivable *ideas:* for we cannot observe any alteration to be made in, or operation upon anything, but by the observable change of its sensible *ideas;* nor conceive any alteration to be made but by conceiving a change of some of its *ideas.*" Now, we submit, that if these sentences—which no reader of Locke can deem to be unfairly selected—which are intended, like the rest of his treatise, to emancipate us from the tyranny of certain fictions about power and substance to which we are liable—had appeared in any writer who had not Locke's reputation for clear, straightforward common sense, who lay under the suspicion of a desire to conceal a mystical meaning under a heap of obscure words;—these *ideas* might be malignantly represented as a new Rosicrucian machinery of nymphs or sylphs, called into existence by an ingenious fancy that we might not look at such vulgar things as the gold, the wax, and the sun—might not seek to find out what they are, or how they act upon each other.

The sun, the gold, and the wax, all seen through Ideas.

Locke an ideaist, if not an idealist.

11. Ideas, then, are as much objects of study and worship to a Lockian, as they ever could be to the most extravagant Platonist. And, therefore, when Locke is said to be not an idealist, but the reverse of an idealist, all that is meant is this, that he entirely separates ideas from being or substance; that he regards ideas as impressions made on the mind, or the results of its action upon such impressions; that he believes he is going as near as he can to the root of the mind when he has found the earliest influence that affects it, and has referred to that all other influences of which it is susceptible, all operations in which it takes part. No doubt these reflections may a little shake our opinion of that practical character which we are in the habit of ascribing to his philosophy. For it is surely matter of doubt whether the search into nature can have been *directly* helped by a doctrine which interposed such a barrier as these ideas between the inquirer and the things about which he was inquiring, or which invested with such dignity those conclusions of the senses by which Locke's greatest countryman and contemporary had just proved that the wise and the unwise had been misled in their guesses and their theories respecting the universe. We can only hope that *ultimately* an examination into the influence of the senses would tend to scatter the mists of the senses, and that the trees, and plants, and

His influence on physical inquiries.

green things of the earth might continue to live in spite of the new swarm of notions which seemed threatening to overspread them.

His Psychology.

Search for the mind.

The mind observing the modifications of the mind.

Locke fails in his own professed object.

12. It is the purpose of Locke, as we have seen, to understand the Understanding. He is to dismiss Ontology that he may devote himself to Psychology. We have given our reasons for believing that philosophy was obliged, in the end of the seventeenth century, to take THIS direction; that the opposite one had become unnatural, if not impossible. We cannot doubt, therefore, that the philosophers who consented manfully to inquire what the mind can do, what it demands, what it is, omitting for awhile all those considerations which had appeared so necessary to the early thinkers, would, on the whole, be doing their work best, and would obtain the greatest practical results. But we must hesitate before we can admit that Locke took any great steps in the line which he had chalked out for others and for himself. The passage which we quoted from his chapter "On Power" must suggest to every reader the thought—"Yes; the *mind* entertains these simple or complex ideas. And pray, what may that be?" This rude demand is forced upon us still more strongly by the opening of the nineteenth chapter in the same book, "On the Modes of Thinking." "When the mind turns its view inwardly upon itself, and contemplates its own actions, *thinking* is the first that occurs. In it the mind observes a great variety of modifications, and from thence receives distinct ideas. Thus, the perception which actually accompanies and is annexed to an impression on the body, made by an external object, being distinct from all other modifications of *thinking*, furnishes the mind with a distinct idea which we call *sensation*, which is, as it were, the actual entrance of any idea into the understanding by the senses." These sentences undertake to interpret a certain process which something that we call mind or understanding is engaged in. Can we try them by the only test which ascertains their verity or worth, without being led to ask whether that mind is this which I call my body, or some modification of it? Whether it is I myself? Can I be satisfied to dismiss all or any of these inquiries merely because Locke says it is not his business to examine the organs of sense as a physician examines them; because he entirely repudiates the search into being or first principles? He has encouraged me to the work of self-examination; he has told me that I cannot advance a step without it. Can he say, I not only inhibit you from sailing into the ocean of Being, where you must be lost, I inhibit you also from examining what it is which "is furnished with the distinct ideas we call sensation;" what it is "into which the ideas

enter through the senses?" Is this to remain a mere cabalistic word—an X or unknown quantity for which we are not to find any assignable value?

Ethics of Morals.

13. It is of far more importance to a practical Englishman, who looks upon Locke as especially the man of business, the man of the world, to ask what he has done to give us a moral code which we are to substitute for the code that has an ontological basis. Now, so far as Spinoza represents the most complete and the latest form of pure ontology, there is a curious coincidence between the extreme opposites. Righteousness and justice—the radical opposition of good and evil, right and wrong—were lost for Spinoza in the ocean of Being. He could recognize only the desires and longings of men after something which should satisfy their own nature. Locke, flying from the ocean of Being, starting from the impressions on the senses, as entirely throws aside these old ethical principles and standards. He says, emphatically, "Things are good or evil only in reference to pleasure or pain." If any one calls these sentiments Epicurean, let it be distinctly understood and proclaimed that there was no personal tendency to Epicurism either in Spinoza or in Locke; that they were not bribed to their opinion by any dishonourable inclinations. It was simply the necessity of their respective philosophies which led them to their conclusions. Each would have been inconsequent if he had adopted any other. If God is simply substance and being—if there has been no discovery in life and history of a moral being whose righteousness is the ground and archetype of man's righteousness—Spinoza, considering all men and all nature as part of God, was obliged to regard these ethical distinctions as nothing but inventions of men. If we must begin from the senses—if all knowledge of what man thinks and is must be derived from impressions on the senses, or from reflection on these impressions—the sensations of pleasure and pain must be regarded as the ultimate grounds of good and evil, so far as man has anything to do with them, so far as he can be cognizant of any difference between them. To evade the inference is mere imbecility and cowardice. Locke did himself honour, and did us good, by putting it forward without shrinking or modification. We are convinced that the doctrine was modified or utterly transformed in his own life, as it was in that of Spinoza; but we are not convinced that the acceptance of Christian doctrine by Locke, in terms in which it was not accepted by Spinoza, affected his dogmas upon this subject. Pleasure and pain remained the foundations of his ethics, *plus* the proclamation of a future state of rewards and punishments, which showed

Pleasure and pain the foundations of good and evil according to Locke as well as Spinoza.

Necessity of Locke's conclusion from his premises.

Not affected by his Christian doctrine.

that pleasure and pain, both here and hereafter, were annexed to certain acts that promoted or that disturbed the peace and order of society.

Politics of Locke.

The patriarchal theory.

Locke specially qualified to confute it.

14. From these Ethics the transition is natural to the Politics of Locke—from the *Essay on the Human Understanding* to the *Treatise on Government.* We have alluded already to the theory of which that memorable work is a confutation. We have seen how the belief of an actual government of God, which had filled the mind of the Puritan, and inspired his acts, had called forth the anti-theocratic doctrine of Hobbes; how the Episcopalian divines and lawyers, dreading each result equally, had imagined a delegation of regal authority to Adam, to Noah, or to Abraham, who had transmitted it, through certain intermediate hands, to the sovereigns of the seventeenth century, and especially, so far as England was concerned, to the sons and heirs of Charles I. This doctrine had been stated in its crudest form by Sir Robert Filmer. It had been connected with certain notions of a paternal, patriarchal government. It had appealed to certain vague impressions on the English mind respecting the authority of Scripture, which it outraged; to certain deeper feelings respecting the sacredness of family life and hereditary succession, which had proved their strength in various periods of our history—never more than in the crisis of the Exclusion Bill, nay, of the Revolution, which could not place William on the throne but by the side of Mary, and could only confirm Mary's title by asserting that God had cast down James for violating the constitution which he had sworn to uphold. With these helps, even such a theory, so defended, might obtain a certain measure of acceptance, might do something to embarrass a newly established and not very popular dynasty. Locke was the man of all men to expose it. He had enough of the sympathies of the Puritans to be excused if he defended their liberty apart from the theocratic faith which they were themselves losing. He could adopt what he found tenable and convenient in the doctrines of Hobbes, without the least suspicion of being a champion of arbitrary rule. Filmer was no doubt a contemptible adversary, but in crushing him Locke created or developed a counter doctrine which was hailed as the philosophical defence of the English Revolution, as the text-book of English Whiggism, as an exposition of the true conditions of dominion and freedom to all countries. The first part of the task was accomplished easily and triumphantly. Filmer's doctrine crumbled to pieces in the hands of his great antagonist. The introductory part of the *Essay on Government* is the best possible commentary

on the other essay. Ideas, so far as they have any connection with being and substance, are cast aside. We have no Platonical dream of a righteousness which is equally implied in the life of an individual and the life of a state. We have no Aristotelian attempt to deduce a polity from the actual relations of the father, child, husband, wife, master, servant. We have no Hebrew or Puritanical dream of a divine Ruler over nations. But we have the idea, or, as it had been called, the phantasy of an original contract made somewhere and somehow by the governor and the governed, about which we are told everything except the where and the when. And this contract is not supported by that bold conception of a natural state of war, which Hobbes saw to be its only protection, if it is not to be recognized as one of those innate ideas which Locke undertakes to explode. It remains as the great experiment of the new philosophy in the way of building; one of immense interest, because it links together the two revolutions, and because it shows how the most famous of constitutional writers could utterly lose the belief of a constitution which exists, while he was seeking for the origin of that which has never existed.

His theory of a contract.

Very ideal.

Locke's different books prophetical of the coming time.

15. If our national vanity is somewhat disturbed by these reflections upon one of the most eminent men whom England has produced, it may find several consolations. One lies in the remembrance that our institutions have always done more for us, and have expressed more to us, than all the books which have apologized for them, and framed speculations to account for them. The other is, that Locke, whatever he may have failed to do in one department of thought or another, as a psychologist or politician, certainly inaugurated a new era of study upon all. The questions which he raised, and which he did not settle, respecting the Nature of the Mind, respecting the Principles of Government, respecting Toleration, respecting Education, respecting the Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, were those which the eighteenth century was called to discuss in the gossip of salons, with pens, with bludgeons, with swords—with tears, also, and prayers. We cannot do better than recollect the titles of his books if we wish to know what inquiries were occupying all men, consciously or unconsciously, during the fifty years that followed his death. We cannot do better than try to understand the tone of his mind in its strength and weakness, if we would know what was to be the tone of these years generally, and what was to be the reaction against it.

Division of writers.

16. Regarding Locke as a sign of the times, we are under no necessity of proving that those minds which took their direction from his were immediately under his influence. The evi-

dence of such influence, in the case of foreigners, must be chiefly their own confessions. In those who spoke and wrote our language the evidence may often be strongest where the confession is not made, or is made reluctantly. We use the expression, "*who spoke and wrote our language*," because it is necessary in the eighteenth century to distinguish English, Scotch, Irish, and American philosophies,—all possessing some common characteristics, but having differences which they derived from the circumstances of their respective countries, as well as from the individual characters of the men whose names we connect with them. The most conspicuous of these men we prepose to mention in the order of their appearance, before we allude to their contemporaries of other lands. The writers whom we can claim as ours may not have left as deep traces of themselves upon the annals of society or of science as some Frenchmen and some Germans who flourished side by side with them. But for us they must be more significant; at all events, we must be more capable of appreciating their significance. It would be affectation in an English sketch to postpone them to the others. If there is any hope of our doing the others justice, it can only arise from our having realized, in some imperfect degree, through our own nearer and more familiar experiences, a few of those wants of the times which they encountered and tried to satisfy.

English first who are included in that name?

Shaftesbury (1671-1713)

17. In Dryden's celebrated satire the fate of Achitophel is deplored, because he sacrificed his soul, as well as its poor "tenement of clay," for the sake of that "two-legged thing, a son." Achitophel's grandson might have promised him a better reward for such toil. The Lord Shaftesbury whose name is associated with the philosophy, as *his* name is associated with the politics, of England, would deserve to be remembered if it were only because no one of our writers can be called a disciple of Locke so certainly as he can. He has himself gratefully acknowledged his obligations to his instructor; so adding one more proof to the many we possess, that nothing is less safe than to predict the effects of an education, however carefully and systematically it may be conducted. Out of the school of the enemy of ideals proceeded a man who has often, and with some excuse, been represented as a Platonist—who certainly made the ideal of what is honourable or beautiful the main principle of his morality. The defender of the reasonableness of Christianity trained a writer who thought Christianity unreasonable. The man of Puritan origin, whose qualities were emphatically those of the English middle class, and who has been their idol, developed in his pupil an intense feeling of aristocratic superiority and contempt, which lowered his highest thoughts, and defiled with a certain narrowness and vulgarity the grace

His unlikeness to his tutor.

His characteristics. and gentleness which he undoubtedly possessed. It is this union of qualities which makes Shaftesbury of more importance in the metaphysical and moral history of our country than he would be in virtue of any thoughts which he originated or circulated. We see in him what it was that the accomplished and high-born young men of his day revolted from in the doctors and divines by whom they were surrounded—what it was that they, consciously or unconsciously, aimed at—what it was that they could and could not sympathize with. Shaftesbury's *Letter on Enthusiasm* is one of the most curious documents upon these points to be found anywhere. He is, in his own way, an enthusiast. He thinks the old invocation of the Muse by Greek poets was no idle form, such as it had become in the verses of Grub Street rhymesters and of school-boys. He doubts if any man ever did anything great without some inspiration, some sense of a divine presence. But then, by the divine presence he can understand nothing that is not good, beautiful, delectable. To feel this must always elevate a man's character; what he likes he will become like. The chief part of the enthusiasm which exists among men comes from the sense of a dark presence, from the dread of something painful. They fly to the Divinity because they are in trouble or fear, when they really ought to think of Him, and can only think of Him properly, when they are serene and happy. The evil kind of enthusiasm is very mischievous to the world; all are interested in getting rid of it. But how is it to be got rid of? Persecutions have been tried and have failed. They evidently cultivate the evil. There is nothing, Shaftesbury thinks, like ridicule. That will never crush any true enthusiasm. That is the effectual remedy against the false. Look, he says, at those people who have lately come over to us from France. These poor wretches have their prophets, to whom they attribute all kinds of wisdom and inspiration. The King of France persecuted them. We allowed them to settle among us with all their nonsense. Our people mock them at Bartholomew Fair. Which remedy will prove most effectual?

His *Letter on Enthusiasm.*

Inspiration.

The divine image.

Use of ridicule.

The theology of sunshine. 18. A divine being who could only be approached and worshipped in sunshine and on gala days was one eminently suited to the temper of the eighteenth century. That such an idea and such services were not necessarily expanding or purifying to the mind is evident, we think, from the fact that they could not hinder a man like Shaftesbury from insulting a set of silk weavers who had left their land, and all that was dear to them, for the sake of conscience and freedom—could not hinder him from degrading the national hospitality, which was so profitable to us then, and which we have vaunted so much since, by a

The practical results.

Shaftesbury's test unfortunate.

What he may teach us

The need of a light which is not the same with sunshine, though the sunshine may speak of it.

rudeness which would have destroyed the worth of much more disinterested kindness. Shaftesbury would have seen the meanness of such conduct in any individual case; he would have revolted from it as instinctively as any man. It is quite possible that he might have been a generous benefactor to some of those very refugees if they had thrown themselves upon his charity. But, considering that he is setting before us a high and chivalrous ideal—considering that he is pointing out to us the difference between the moral effects of *his* divinity and that of the slavish victims of an evil power—we cannot but regard this practical illustration of his faith as singularly unfortunate. Shaftesbury's theory of ridicule may be a true one. If it is, we may ask ourselves, at the end of a century and a-half, whether he or those who were laughed at in Bartholomew fair can most safely endure the test. We must not, however, lose the benefit of his sarcasm for ourselves, because we think it is ill-applied in this instance. He had a right to demand of Christian divines that they should set before him and before the age an object "who is light, and in whom is no darkness at all." He had a right to complain of them if they failed to meet this demand. He had a right to say that they could only separate the true from the false enthusiasm if they took this course. Saying so, he was pleading for the God of whom the Apostle testifies—for the God to whom men may fly in the midst of their sorrow; not for the divinity who was created out of the pleasant images which he saw in his galleries and his parks, who could only be contemplated when all uncomfortable facts were out of sight. Shaftesbury had, we may well believe, a truer and better ideal than this in his inmost heart. Galleries and parks, the images of grace and beauty which he had seen, the kind acts he had done, may have borne witness to him of a gracious Being from whom they proceeded. Let us who have not his temptations give him credit for this, however strongly he may have felt the duty of ridiculing those who had been trained in another school.

Bolingbroke (1678-1751).

19. Some churchmen will be eager to make the Whiggism of Locke responsible for the anti-sacerdotal direction of Shaftesbury's mind, though they will acquit him of any share in nourishing his aristocratical tendencies. There would be more excuse for the opposite opinion. If a young nobleman had needed the impulse of a tutor to make him feel sharply the distinction between the knowledge which befits a man of birth, and that which belongs strictly to the scholar, Locke's *Treatise on Education* shows us where he might have obtained that impulse. But the Tory Bolingbroke was far more contemptuous towards priests than any Whig, or any pupil of a Whig, in his

His hatred of priests.

day. Bolingbroke, like many more, had become a champion of the Church because he hated the Puritans; he was sure to indemnify himself afterwards for that forced political affection. He was right to confess the infidelity which was not at all more real in his latter days than when he was defending Sacheverell or acting as prime minister to the Pretender. The philosophy of Shaftesbury has a root apart from his conventional position, and the feelings which were connected with that position. He is a *man* seeking a high object, though the man is with him, as with the Black Prince, the opposite of the churl, though the high object is such an object as it befits one who is not a churl to pursue. Bolingbroke looks down with equally serene scorn upon priests, philosophers, and people. He is not the least anxious to refute divines by a scheme of atheistical philosophy. He refutes them by showing that he can conceive a God as well as they can, and that the God whom he conceives is one whose nature can by no possibility have any affinity with the nature of man; whom it is the most extravagant presumption for man to dream of knowing. Bolingbroke adds nothing to what Hobbes had said and Locke had implied, on the subject, except his own aristocratical air of confidence, and a little abuse of Cudworth, the Platonists, and the Schoolmen. He tosses philosophical expositions about as Pope found him tossing the haycocks at his country seat, with infinite grace and condescension. The poet witnessed each performance with equal admiration. No ear could have detected more quickly than his the falsetto in these notes if he had not been bribed, as it was honourable to him that he should be, by an extravagant but real and quite disinterested affection for the musician. The relation of the two friends to each other has been curiously misinterpreted.. The *Essay on Man* has been supposed to derive all its worth from the doctrines which Bolingbroke has contributed to it. Might it not be much more fairly described as a stately mausoleum in which these doctrines have been saved from putrefaction? They are not more vague and declamatory in their rhymed than in their prose form, but far more distinct and pointed. The folds of affectation and conceit in which they were wrapped have in great measure been stripped off from them. We now see what there was in them which accorded with the temper of the age, what had a suitableness to the poet's own temper and circumstances, what had a permanent worth. A time which despaired of the ocean of Being, and yet clung to the old name of God, and desired to confess Him as exercising some providence over the universe, would welcome the precept, "Presume not God to scan." It would be specially acceptable to a man of letters bred in Romanism, with no special turn for speculation, bewildered by the various opinions

A despiser of philosophers as such.

His theology.

The *Essay on Man.*

How much Bolingbroke owes to it.

Its leading maxim.

Thus belonging to the age and to Pope.

The belief in order.

which he heard in a circle consisting of Atterbury, Garth, Swift, Bolingbroke; frequented sometimes by Berkeley, now and then visited by Addison. Most of these would, on the whole, be willing to adopt the maxim. The position that the "proper study of mankind is man" would at once commend itself to a writer who felt how much his own particular tastes or gifts inclined and enabled him to take notice of the passing humours and habits of his fellow-creatures. A general optimism was not unsuitable to one of a sickly constitution, inclined to benevolence, feeling keenly the vexations and falsehoods of the world of letters and of fashion; not much acquainted with the region that lies beyond its flaming walls. But beneath all this was the conviction of an order not created by man, to which it is well that he should yield himself; a conviction for which Pope might be grateful to any man from whom he thought he had derived it; which we may be grateful to him for strengthening in us, even if we have found that it needs the support of other truths which he did not as clearly perceive.

Natural religion.

The English deists.

Regularity of nature.

The *Principia.*

20. This feeling of an Order, which is certainly the prominent one in the poem, would not strike a modern student as the prominent one in the "guide, philosopher, and friend" of the poet. Apparently his object is chiefly to impress us with the sufficiency of natural religion for all the purposes of life, with the inutility, and on the whole the mischievousness of those religions which have been thought necessary to supply its deficiencies. This negative doctrine was widely diffused in that time. It was the characteristical doctrine of the English deists in the first half of the eighteenth century—a class consisting of many varieties, often unfairly confounded in the answers which were made to them, but agreeing in the notion that the priests of different nations had invented systems which appealed to the fears of man, to their passion for the marvellous, to their desire of penetrating into the impenetrable, and that the correction of these mischiefs was to be found in an acknowledgment of the uniformity of nature, of certain principles which govern our own lives, or of certain lessons of experience deduced from the study of history or of individual men. The regularity of nature impressed the men of this time as it had impressed no previous generation. The Copernican doctrine had burst upon them no longer as a speculation, but as a truth. It had been ascertained. Those who could not follow out for themselves the processes by which it had been ascertained, yet accepted it, not as an hypothesis, but as a demonstrated law. This was surely quite unlike any system which appeared to assume the irregularities of human conduct as its foundation; quite unlike any which appealed to continual inter-

ruptions in the course of nature, to sudden and appalling events, which, because they were sudden and appalling, were referred to a divine intervention.

Negative argument from science.

Here was one plea, the most impressive, if not the strongest of all—the one that was most connected with the great movements and discoveries of the age—for the protest against whatever was included under the name of revealed as distinct from natural religion. It was not necessary specially to inquire which of these religions might be the best or the worst. That argument might be left to the divines. The Christian Brahmins or dervishes would no doubt be able to make out a case for their own faith against Hinduism or Mahometanism. The philosophers had a preliminary objection to all. All assumed a disturbance of that order which nature led us to reverence; all interfered, therefore, with the confession of the God of nature. These thoughts had more to do with the lessons of Newton than with those of Locke, or even of Bacon—with the contemplation of nature than with the contemplation of the understanding—with the grand cosmos which astronomy unfolded than with the particular facts to which the patient experimentalist devoted himself.

Religion considered as in the mind.

But the word *religion* led the inquirer away from this ground to a reflection upon the processes of his own mind. Religion was clearly something not outside of the man, but, if anything, a sentiment, a perception, an obligation within him; so those who were occupied about natural religion must inquire to what this sentiment, perception, obligation pointed.

Its objects.

The Shaftesbury religion.

We have seen how Shaftesbury, with all his Lockian education, was induced to make some standard of beauty or excellence, such as the old Greeks had dreamt of, the object of his religion; though he was so far faithful to his English teacher that he separated this standard, if not wholly, yet to a great extent, from any association with being or substance—regarding it as little more than a bright vision which it would be good for any man, and which it was possible for a cultivated nobleman, to cherish.

Wollaston (1659-1720).

Wollaston's *Religion of Nature* had a more stable foundation than this. Formed in a time before the *Essay on the Human Understanding* had obtained authority, but participating in many of the feelings that gave birth to it, Wollaston regarded truth as the foundation of man's nature. To be true was to be happy. This consideration seems to have brought him, though a clergyman, to a discontent with many of the doctrines which he had been taught to graft upon his natural perception. He thought they connected morality with something else than truth, and deduced it rather from evil than from good. Both these forms of deism were mixed in Bolingbroke, not very consistently, but as they were sure to be in a man who was the brilliant reflex of his time rather than an

Historical deism.

Tindal (1657-1733). Collins (1676-1729). Objections to Christianity as such.

Mandeville (1676-1733).

original thinker. They were united in him also with the third or historical form to which we have alluded. History contained for him a series of evidences respecting priestcraft generally, respecting the combination of priestcraft with philosophy, respecting the attempts of politicians to make both serve their own ends. The particular objections to the scriptural records, as interfering with the religion of nature, as being grounded upon a departure from the order of nature, or as being only a repetition of the precepts of nature, were reserved for Collins, Tindal, and Toland. A more eccentric genius than any of these had drawn an inference from *his* study of history which clashed greatly with some of their conclusions. Mandeville had seen in the world a strange hive of bees, which were obtaining honey by the most unlawful methods, and turning it to the common benefit. Not only was it impossible to distinguish good from evil, right from wrong, but the greatest general benefits resulted from the greatest private vices. Just the acts which priests and philosophers were agreed to condemn as violations of a revealed law or a natural law, it was the wisdom of statesmen to encourage, as ministering to the benefit of the commonwealth.

The physico-theology.

Clarke (1675-1729).

Arianism arising out of Naturalism

Bentley (1661-1742).

Warburton (1698-1779).

21. The history of moral and metaphysical philosophy in England, between Locke and Hume, is intimately involved with the dogmas and speculations of these deists. They were far from insignificant themselves; the Christian advocates followed, of necessity, in their track. Thus the most vigorous part of the thought of the time rises out of these attacks; physico-theology occupies the most distinguished divines as well as the most distinguished freethinkers. Samuel Clarke, as much as Bolingbroke, is chiefly busy with a God of nature. Men are supposed to own Him first in that character. He may afterwards be pleased to supply the deficiencies of nature, to lay down laws for men as individuals and as members of society, to give them helps for fulfilling these laws. Clarke accepted the Law and the Prophets as interpreters of His mind. The mission of Christ seemed to him needful that it might be thoroughly understood and accomplished. But when the question of a relation between God and man presented itself to him, the Arian hypothesis was the one into which he slid almost inevitably, as did a number of his contemporaries and successors, clerical as well as lay. Bentley, as a defender of the faith, felt that he was doing his best in starting from the ground which Newton gave him. Warburton, who carried into his second profession the habits and spirit of his first, whilst he was striking right and left at all who assailed the cause which he had undertaken, and at many who presumed to defend it in

a different method from his own, yet asserted the orthodoxy of the *Essay on Man*, and gave Pope hints respecting the meaning of it, which appear to have caused him much pleasure and some surprise.

Berkeley (1684-1753)

22. If his friend Berkeley had written a commentary on the same poem it would have been in no disparaging tone, though it might not have been as complimentary as Warburton's. Berkeley was quite as well inclined as Pope or Bolingbroke to regard the proper study of mankind as man. He was quite as little inclined as Pope or Bolingbroke to measure God's government by his standards. That was the very offence which he objected against different classes of deists in his *Minute Philosopher*. He thought they were applying imperfect notions, deduced from the sensible world or from a very narrow experience, to determine the laws by which the universe is governed. But he began soon to feel that he could not assail them effectually unless he laid bare what seemed to him a sophism that was common to them with their antagonists. Both alike assumed matter as a datum or primary fact, the existence of which could not be gainsaid. Well, and could he deny this datum? Did he distrust the evidence of his senses? I do not distrust, he answered, the evidence of my senses at all. I do not doubt that I see the sun; that I hear music; that I taste an apple. What I doubt is the existence of an abstraction. You tell me that I have the faculty of abstracting; that it is a great faculty; that it is the specially human faculty. I am not sure that I have this faculty at all; if I have, I attach little worth to it. I am satisfied it is not that which raises me above the animals. When you call me to believe in matter you call me to assume a certain substratum to the things which I see, hear, taste. I cannot see, hear, taste that substratum. Why am I to assume it? Has not the course of all moral philosophy been to discard such assumptions as fictions? On what plea do you rest your incessant denunciation of the Schoolmen, except on this, that they have invested such fictions with reality? What have the Nominalists been at work for so long, if, after all, we are to ascribe to this mysterious conception which is called matter, soundness and solidity? Why is it to be preserved from the fate that has overtaken so many of its rivals, which, each in its day, could assert for itself the same high claims?

The *Minute Philosopher*.

The principles of human knowledge.

Matter an imaginary substratum.

Berkeley's aims.

23. Berkeley had no doubt that he was carrying Locke's battle against entities into another region. But he was also convinced that the prevalent superstition respecting matter was a fatal hindrance to the acknowledgment of any spiritual reality. Secretly those who spoke most highly of man's faculties were assuming this matter as the ground and the limit of every

exercise of his faculties; those who spoke most of the God of nature were on the point of reducing Him under their conceptions of matter. Possessed by this feeling, he advanced fearlessly in his course. Whatever perils might seem to be involved in it, to whatever scepticism it might lead those who were seeking occasions to scepticism, the dignity of spirit must be exalted as the dignity of matter was laid low. That which had been degraded into a mere minister of the things of sense, whose highest function had been supposed to be this, that it could extract some ore out of the crude material that was presented to it, but which as often was occupied in making that material into notions that were far less pure and precious than itself, might now come forth in its true character, might claim to be the real quickener of objects that without it would have no life. The possibility that hereafter this exaltation of spirit might lead to a denial of any Being higher than man—that the universe might appear to him his own creation — scarcely presented itself to the mind of Berkeley. It was not the peril of his time. A Creator was not denied by any of the minute philosophers with whom Berkeley contended. What he desired to impress them with was the belief that the Being who made the outward world was a Spirit, who took cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart; that the words to the poor woman who drew water at the well ascended above the philosophy of the eighteenth century; that they were real and scientific, that it was conversant with phantasies and shadows.

Exaltation of spirit.

God a Spirit.

24. Such, as we understand it, is the idealism of Berkeley—a name ill applied to his doctrine, if it is supposed to represent an unpractical habit of mind, an inclination to overlook facts, a preference for a world which we create to the world which we find. Berkeley was remarkable amongst his contemporaries for his devotion to practical objects. If his zeal carried him into other worlds, and made him anticipate blessings for our colonies which could not be attained in his day, it shrunk from no conflict with realities; it did not waste itself in any dreams. To watch the complaints of his people, to give them tar water, and carefully to examine and register its effects, was part of his work as a parish priest, and became a link in the chain of his philosophical thoughts. In his treatment of his diocese, and in his conception of the duties of the English government to the English settlers, towards the Irish and their faith, he displayed the soundest sense and benevolence. He anticipated maxims which after-years have been compelled to study, accept, and act upon. Surrounded by the most accomplished and the most critical men of his times, who shared little in his belief, some of whom were directly opposed to it, he was never regarded with

Idealism, how far a suitable name for Berkeley's doctrine.

His character a practical one.

General reverence for it among his friends.

His life and books consistent.

any feelings but those of admiration and affection. Pope looked with contempt on the coxcombs who answered Berkeley with a grin. Of Berkeley himself he could only say that he had every virtue under heaven. And any one who considers his philosophy as he himself unfolds it, in that style which Sir James Mackintosh envied for all writers on such subjects, will not be startled by any obvious contradiction between the doctrines and the life. No reader of his controversies with deists will complain of Berkeley for flying from the earth to the clouds. His arguments are often, in our judgment, too utilitarian. Sophistries which we should be glad to see exposed by an appeal to principle are denounced merely as leading to bad political results. His infirmity is not therefore of the kind that we might suspect even in those parts of his writings where he is least to be trusted, where he most assumes the character of a special pleader. A conviction that speculators had strayed from the path of reality—a wish to find his way back into the path—even at the risk of appearing to go farther from it—are characteristic of the books which directly set forth his idealism.

Malebranche and Berkeley, why incapable of understanding each other.

25. We alluded in a former page to the interview between Malebranche and Berkeley, and to its result. That result can cause us little wonder, though it must have caused both parties in the dialogue much pain, and though the excitement of it is said to have hastened the death of the French sage. There was an apparent agreement in their habits of mind. There must have been a deeply grounded assurance in the mind of the younger that he was seeking the same end which Malebranche was seeking. But they were born in different periods, and the maxims from which they started were different. Being was for the Cartesian the root of all thoughts and ideas; he could see nothing apart from that. Being had been banished for the ideas of Locke, and Berkeley's annihilation of matter was in his own judgment the legitimate consequence and fulfilment of the method which Locke had initiated. How could they understand one another? How must the effort to do it have increased their misunderstanding! And of all mental distresses perhaps the greatest to one who would fain be a disciple is the discovery that the man whom he has regarded with distant reverence holds him aloof as an alien; the greatest to one who has been trying to teach the world certain lessons is, that the younger men who fancy they embrace them most cordially, are likely to pervert or invert them. The former must earn his wisdom through this, among other hard experiences; for the latter, the only refuge must be in the faith that God unfolds Himself in many ways; that there must be a reason for every

The hostility of their methods.

Sufferings of the young and the old.

change which takes place in the methods of human thought and discipline; that if the old are needed again they will be found after many days. If Malebranche could not cherish this faith, he might die of a less disappointment than that which was occasioned by his dialogue with Berkeley. That they now apprehend each other's deepest meanings; that they rejoice in the light which flows to each through the other, and fills up what is imperfect in his own vision; that they would wish us to profit by the confusions and contradictions in which they were involved while the muddy vesture of earth's mould did grossly close them in, for our own guidance and warning, is a belief from which we may surely draw comfort. We may discern by degrees what treasures each has bequeathed to us which the other could not bequeath; we may perceive that each period must work out its appointed task; that an earlier has no right to exalt itself against a later, or a later against an earlier.

The cure for it.

Moral of the story.

Butler (1692-1752).

26. Butler was born eight years after Berkeley, and died one year before him. About him, as about Berkeley, the question suggests itself, is he to be considered primarily as an apologist, or primarily as an ethical philosopher? This question commonly receives an opposite answer in the two cases. Berkeley's *Principles of Human Knowledge* occur to us before his *Dialogues*. Butler's *Analogy* is more read than his *Sermons on Human Nature.* Chronologically, and we believe on other grounds also, his short correspondence with Dr. Clarke ought to be placed before both of them. In that correspondence he appears as a young man questioning with a modesty and subtlety which were no less characteristic of him in his latest years those demonstrations of the necessary existence and omnipresence of God which seemed to Clarke, and to many besides him, so decisive. He wishes to think Clarke's arguments irrefragable. About the conclusion he has no kind of doubt; but he sees gaps in the proof. He is most ready to have his objections confuted; but though he feels the great condescension and the great ability of Clarke's replies, they do not wholly content him. Nay, some fresh difficulties arise out of the attempts at solution. A subject which was presently to occupy the attention of the profoundest thinkers on the Continent forces itself upon the mind of this practical Englishman. Space and Time are assumed by Clarke as if they actually existed in the things which we contemplate. Do they so exist? Butler does not know. It sometimes strikes him that they may be only modes of our minds. No doubt, if they could be assumed as the substratum of all we see, and if the Divine Being could be assumed as the necessary sub-

His earliest work, Letters to Clarke.

Space and Time.

Demonstrations—will they stand?

Clarke's final letter.

Eternity and duration.

stratum of them, the exposure of atheism might be much more rapid and complete. But is this a safe method? Will it commend itself to the minds of human beings generally, who need the belief of God for their daily life? Butler's hints are in this stage of his life, as in every stage, more important to us, more instructive about himself, than his conclusions. Evidently these demonstrations are not grounds upon which he means to build hereafter, or upon which he can place much reliance at present. Nor, we suspect, will Clarke's concluding letter, which silenced him at the time, and which established a firm friendship between the Arian clergyman and the young half-conformist, have done much, in later years, to make Butler in love with the demonstrative method. In it Clarke tries to establish the solidity of his own proofs by calumniating outrageously the method and arguments of Descartes; he treats as ridiculous, and as the cause of all confusion, the attempts which all people before him had made to distinguish between duration and eternity, rightly and reasonably adding, that these distinctions had much to do with what he calls the "scholastic notion of the Trinity."

Butler, in what sense a follower of Locke.

He endorses the complaints of deists respecting the treatment of human nature by divines.

27. On the whole, we believe we are not wrong in considering these letters, though dry in themselves, fuller of philosophical suggestions than most that are extant in our language; above all, as distinctly marking out the course which Butler was to follow throughout his life. If Locke desired men to fix their thoughts upon their own understandings, to consider what exercises befitted them, of what they were incapable—if Locke desired to apply the experimental method, which had been slowly establishing itself in physics, to morals likewise—no one assuredly entered into his intention so thoroughly as Butler; no one so resolutely discarded all methods which interfered with it; no one more thoroughly conformed himself to the conditions of his age, even when he was opposing some of its prevalent opinions, and striking at what he regarded as its characteristic diseases. If the deists of the day found fault with the disparaging theories of human nature which had been current among divines, Butler fully agreed with them. If by human nature is understood the order or constitution which is implied in the doings, thoughts, judgments of men—with which each man confesses to himself, that he is meant to be in conformity—Butler believed that he could not slander it without slandering the Creator. The slanders which had been put upon this nature by Hobbes and his school—the attempts to explain all the facts which seem to mean benevolence into something entirely different—were precisely those which he thought it was his function, as a divine, to refute, those which contained an implicit sanction for evil doings. Yet he did not

His method of argument.

care to refute them by the professional arguments of a divine; he did not overwhelm them with texts of Scripture. When he referred to these, even in his sermons, he rather treated them as belonging to the circumstances of the times in which they were written than pressed them with any vigour into the service of his own. All his arguments are deduced from the actual experiences of human beings. He will hear of no theories which explain away facts—which start from any other ground than that of facts. He wishes to know what the things mean with which he has to meddle. He wishes to know what he is bound to be and to do, that he may not be in contradiction with himself—that he may not be a practical liar.

His dread of lazy acquiescence.

The moral theories which he opposed plausible and popular.

Self-love and social affections.

28. We have spoken of certain diseases which Butler thought a teacher of his day was bound to combat. If we ask what the chief of them was, he will tell us again and again that he looked upon it as laziness in inquiry, unwillingness to face facts, the acceptance of the easiest and most current opinions. Considering that he was encountering freethinkers, and that he has been accepted as the defender of that which was established, such language may cause us some surprise. It came forth most simply and naturally from him; unless we accept it as simply and naturally, and profit by his warnings, he may be for us the *magni nominis umbra*—the *Analogy* may be for us a book to conjure with—but what he meant and what it means will be unintelligible to us. The doctrines upon human nature which he combats in his sermons were all plausible doctrines. There were strong motives for receiving them. They squared with a number of theories which had passed for orthodox in the Church. The readers of *La Rochefoucauld* felt them to be the only possible explanations of tempers which they had observed in others and been conscious of in themselves. Hobbes had raised upon them a perfectly compacted system of individual and social life. But would they bear the test of examination better than any of those theories—the produce of different schools—about the outward world, which had crumbled to pieces when it had been tortured into telling its own secrets? Was it not clear that men were bound to each other by ties and obligations which they could not set at nought? What did it help us to say that these obligations could be interpreted into ambition, or the love of power, or the wish which each of us has to get something for himself? There is self-love in us undoubtedly. Can you show that it is inconsistent with these social affections? Can you prove that they may not work together for the same end? Are there not some very manifest proofs that they may? Do not the acts which are at war with a man's personal interest interfere also with the interest of his neighbour? Do not the things which interfere

with the interest of his neighbour interfere with his own? Do you not charge foolish men with wronging themselves just as often as you charge them with wronging their neighbours?

The conscience.

29. With *wronging*, you say; but what tells you anything about *wrong?* You own that I have passions and inclinations in my nature which may lead me into certain courses if I obey them; why am I not to obey them? They are parts of that nature which you say is good, which I have received from God. I do maintain that, Butler answers; but I maintain also that there is a faculty in that nature which approves *this* use of the affections and passions, which disapproves and condemns *that*. I maintain that you have not understood your nature—that you have left out the principal constituent of it—that without which the rest have no cohesion—that without which they signify nothing—if you do not recognize this CONSCIENCE. I do not ask you to recognize it as involved in a theory, even if it were the divinest possible—the one which had the sublimest warrants for it. I ask you to recognize it as a fact which is indicated by all human speech—without which the sentences which men pass upon one another, as well as all the decrees of legislators, would have no weight, and would be impossible. The existence of a conscience is implied in all you think, speak, do. The right of the conscience to dominion is implied in all you think, speak, do. You may defy its dominion; but there it is. You may give it another name, or explain it away; but its witness to you and to every man will remain nevertheless. If any one will read carefully over the three *Sermons on Human Nature*, he will find that Butler is as cautious in taking his steps as he has ever been represented to be, but that he is as decisive in setting forth these results of his cautious experiments as we have affirmed him to be. It is the decision of an experimentalist, not the decision of an *à priori* thinker. But he is not the less fixed in his conviction that there is an order in human nature—an order in the midst of its most violent fluctuations—than the most determined *à priori* thinker could be. He has been seeking for a ground upon which he could act, and he will not be satisfied till he has felt that ground; he will not let us be satisfied till we have felt it. There is to be no comfortable acquiescence in any opinions which we have inherited, or have chosen for ourselves, till we have got our feet upon this ground. Butler will torment us—he will call us indifferent and cowardly, whether we call ourselves freethinkers or orthodox—if we are not exercising our whole faculty to discover what the order is in which we are placed, and how we may conform ourselves to it.

A necessary constituent of human nature.

Implied in all the thoughts and judgments of men.

Butler not less strong in his conclusions because he attains them through experiment.

Butler's doctrine of the

30. How many difficulties are involved in the word *nature*, in all its applications, we have often had occasion to remark.

Conscience may not satisfy all the facts which its existence implies.

The human constitution a fact, not a theory.

We may be obliged to consider presently whether Butler has altogether escaped these difficulties in his account of human nature—whether a further consideration of it may not be necessary, in order fully to justify the place which he assigns to the conscience, and to reconcile the facts which he treats in so masterly a style with other facts—themselves directly related to the conscience—which presented themselves with tremendous force to some of his contemporaries. But no such reflections, to whatever point they may lead us, will interfere with the belief that Butler has advanced by a sure path to his assertion, that there is a human constitution which every man implicitly confesses to be his constitution—which he confesses that neither he nor any man is able with impunity to violate. We repeat it—on whatever subject Butler hesitates, in whatever sense hesitation is a characteristic of his mind—there is no hesitation here. And further, to whatever extent Butler may sometimes ask that opinions should be admitted as likely, though the evidence for them is not satisfactory or overwhelming, it is on no such pleas that he proceeds in his discourses *On Human Nature.* He professes not to give us notions, but to make us aware of principles which we are obliged to assume in word and act, if we own them ever so little and dislike them ever so much.

The *Analogy*

Reasons for his preference of probable to demonstrative evidence.

Demonstration of a Creator not wanted in Butler's age.

Danger which might ensue from them afterwards.

31. Let this be fairly considered by any one who is entering on the study of the *Analogy.* We should be most inconsistent if we wished to overlook the fact which Butler forces upon our notice in the first pages of his book, that he is dealing only with probable evidence—that he wishes his reader to reflect upon what is *likely*—even upon what is *not unlikely.* By speaking first of the letters to Clarke we have shown how important that fact appears to us, for the understanding of Butler's object and of his mind. Suspicions of Clarke's method were thrust upon him when he would most gladly have adopted it. They must have grown stronger, as he considered not only its own weak places, but the purpose to which it was applied. Clarke wished to convince his countrymen that there was a Creator, and that he must be omnipotent, omnipresent, &c. Why? They had no doubt of it. It was not an age in which there was any active scepticism about these points. They were generally taken for granted. Such an age might come, no doubt—might be not far distant. But surely those who belonged to it would be fitter to understand its needs than those who were only anticipating it. Quite another treatment than that which Clarke imagined might be required for it. Nay, might not the atheism of that coming age draw strength from the discovery that the greatest skill had been employed in constructing arguments which were not weather-proof? It was then a mere waste of

power to supply such reasonings when they were not called for; the power might hereafter undermine the very belief which it sought to establish. A man who reflected less than Butler might have foreseen something of this danger; but if he did not foresee, there were actual necessities in his own time which he could not neglect for the sake of exhibiting his strength in a conflict with giants that had been vanquished, or that had not appeared. Those who took for granted a Creator did not suppose that He had anything to do with them—that He was exercising any direct dominion over their lives—that if He did govern, His government was a real one, like that of parents or kings—that it had a moral end—that there was much behind which we do not see, and can only imperfectly understand.

What was required in that time.

To arouse men to the apprehension of this order, which is now, and which nothing that we know of, nothing outside of it, nothing in itself, can make different, was not to attack the ghosts of another day; it was to engage with the unbelief of that day; an unbelief which might be working in the mind of those who talked most grandly about an order—meaning something at a distance from themselves—something which was much more physical than moral—something which was so sublime that it must never be associated with the common daily acts of human beings.

Only tentative evidence adapted to this object.

But to produce *this* kind of apprehension the grand mathematical evidence is clearly unfitting. For such a purpose that evidence is *not* demonstrative. It may or may not establish large notions about omnipresence and omnipotence, such as Clarke liked to grapple with; it does not meet a man in his walks; it does not make him know that God is anything to him. Butler, with his likelihoods, does this. They link themselves to the facts with which a man is most conversant—most perplexed; they show him in a natural, human way, what these facts must mean, if they mean anything. There are temptations in that kind of argument; the eagerness to make thoughtless men wonder where they are, and whither they are going, may suggest a degree of condescension to their condition which issues in the notion that the lowest, coarsest motives, those which address themselves to the fear of consequences, are the most effective upon human beings; a notion confuted by the experience which is alleged in support of it, and ending, when it is tried, if not in utter failure, then in such effects as Butler would have been most grieved to have any share in producing. A Nemesis, indeed, that a cold calculator should beget the wildest fanaticism! Whenever Butler has been betrayed into a practice so wide of his intention and of his express doctrine as this, the regret of his readers will be in proportion to their reverence and affection for their teacher. And this regret will

Butler a seeker for moral certainty.

become bitterer and deeper when they find that on the strength of such passages Butler is claimed as a champion of probabilities, in the Jesuit sense of that word, or in a sense, less consistent than that of the Jesuit, which supposes that in physics every step is sure, and leads to knowledge, that in morals we are left to guesses. To save us from guesses—to make our steps as even and as firm in the one region as in the other—to apply to the one the very method which had been ascertained to be safest and fullest of results in the other—was Butler's evident design. Any design but that is as inconsistent with his express language as with the whole spirit of his inquiries. Unquestionably he avoided the ocean of Being as religiously as Locke. Unquestionably, if he had entered into converse with any disciple of Malebranche, they would as utterly have misunderstood each other about certainty and probability as Malebranche and Berkeley misunderstood each other about ideas. Butler was not, in the strict sense of the word, a theologian. He had no direct vocation to interpret the Scriptures, though, perhaps, his *Sermons on Human Nature* and Hobbes's *Leviathan* together may have prepared the way for more illumination respecting St. Paul's chapter on the Body and Members, than all formal expositions. He has suffered from his reputation as an apologist—suffered, perhaps, in his own mind from the wish to be an apologist. But he is in the truest sense a moralist; and no one ever sought for moral certainty more faithfully.

Butler and the Wesleys.

The two specimens of preaching.

32. The personal history of Butler stood in curious antithesis to that of some eminent clergymen who were his contemporaries. The son of a nonconformist tradesman, educated at a nonconformist school, he became Bishop of Durham, and in that office delivered a charge respecting the necessity of external forms to the life of religion, illustrating his doctrine by a cross which he set up in his own chapel. John and Charles Wesley, sons of a clergyman, being the strictest observers of ecclesiastical forms and discipline at Oxford, earning by that strictness the name of Methodists once bestowed upon a school of physicians, ended by incurring disgrace with the rulers and doctors of the church, because that name became the symbol of indifference to ecclesiastical authority and formalities—the proclamation that a spiritual power was abroad to humble the pride of those who had deemed themselves religious, to make those religious who had been most indifferent or most degraded. Nor did the contrast stop here. The preacher at the Rolls Chapel exhibited the most perfect specimen of that style of discourse which never can stir the heart of a multitude, which appeals to the student, and to the student only. The Wesleys—still more their early colleague, Whitefield—exhibited the best specimens

The opposing doctrines respecting human nature.

of that kind of discourse which is addressed directly to the hearts of the most miserable and the most sinful of human beings, and is of interest for the student only so far as he feels himself to be one of these. The idea of human nature presented in those discourses of Butler is exactly the antagonist idea to that which was presented in the sermons of the Methodists, even of those who adhered to the milder Wesleyan type of Methodism. Lastly, no men spoke more directly to the consciences of their hearers than the popular preachers; and yet no men would have been less disposed to accept the doctrine of the conscience which Butler had proclaimed.

The importance of the Methodist movement if Butler's practical method is the true one.

A sectarian solution of the matter unsatisfactory.

An eclectic one unsatisfactory.

33. There are several ready escapes from these contradictions. The easiest is to ignore them; to say that the historian of philosophy has only to report philosophical opinions, and to leave those who are not philosophers to go their own way. Butler forbids us to take this course. His doctrine is a protest against the exaltation of philosophical opinions—a demand for an appeal to the facts of human life and experience. The second escape is to take it for granted that Butler, the philosophical divine, was right in the conclusions which he wrought out with so much diligence, and that those preachers to mobs were wrong; or that they who appealed to the Bible, and were indifferent to philosophy, must have been right, and that he who was willing to rest his whole case on the evidence of nature and human experience must have been wrong. But the moral power which these preachers exercised over some of their hearers, the moral results which followed, are for us decisive against the first course, because nothing could be more inconsistent with all Butler's reasoning than to attribute any good effects to an evil cause. And it is as impossible for us to accept the second, unless we hold that the statements of the Bible will not bear to be tried by the tests of nature and human experience—an opinion which, as believers in the Bible, we must repudiate, and which would be specially at variance with the Methodist tests. The third escape is to vibrate between these two opposite statements, to talk of one as true in a certain sense, and the other as true in a certain sense—that certain sense in each case being left in the most utter uncertainty; a very eligible and popular method for those who seek to keep others in twilight, and are content to remain in perpetual twilight themselves; which should be diligently eschewed and solemnly foresworn by all who wish to find out what is true, and to be true.

The restorative principle wanting in Butler's human constitution.

34. Looking at Butler's account of human nature simply as it stands, without reference to any surrounding facts or opinions, one is struck with the thought, "Here is certainly a beautiful order; but it is an order which not only implies the possibility

of disorder, but admits the existence of disorder as a fact. Is there then any restorative power in this order? Can it defend itself? Can it overcome that which is contrary to it?" We do not say that Butler was bound to treat these questions in his *Sermons on Human Nature.* We think that he was altogether wiser for many reasons not to treat of them. But he raises them, and once raised, they cannot be laid. And in the *Analogy* the demand for an answer to them is made still more imperative. In it we discover not only a "human nature" constructed upon certain principles, but a divine government working continuously, not in past times more than in present, against evil and for good. It is no machine, once set in motion, then left to itself. It is a *government* administered by a living Being—a Being interested in all the right and wrong doings of His creatures. And it is a government which, according to the second part of the *Analogy* at all events, nay, according to every part of it, admits of deviations from its ordinary course—what appears to us irregularities—for the fulfilment of its objects; we through our ignorance being unable to pronounce what are deviations—it being quite possible that apparent irregularities, seen from a higher ground, would prove to be parts of a uniform operation. Admitting this, it does not seem to us that Butler could have satisfactorily encountered any Methodist teacher who said to him, "There is a large mass of disorder in this country of ours. What resources have you for encountering it? *We* say, that the God whom you represent as the moral governor of the world, as governing it for moral ends, is directly encountering it, is putting forth a direct power to bring men who are sunk in evil and moral slavery to righteousness and moral freedom." Had the argument been put in this form, we think Butler must at least have listened to it. He might have very good excuse for answering, "Yes; but you do not speak to those whom you address of their coming into the proper orderly condition of human beings. You speak of them as brought into an exceptional condition, a condition which is not the proper one for ordinary men. You speak of human nature as being only evil, and of deliverance from evil being the attainment of some inhuman, or at all events superhuman, condition. Hence, therefore, very consistently, the test of the success of your ministrations is the amount of irregular excitement which you can produce in your disciples." To this a considerate man, like Wesley himself, would probably have replied, that he believed the ultimate effect of his Gospel to men was to lead them from a disorderly life to an orderly one. That the transition from one to the other was commonly attended with struggles which some might mistake for good, but which he only

Does his divine government contain it?

A government admitting of seeming departures from its ordinary course

Use which might be made of this statement.

How Butler might have defended himself.

The rejoinder.

welcomed as an almost inevitable process for arriving at good. That with respect to the other question, he agreed with the Church in thinking the regenerated man to be the only righteous man in God's sight. That he held a superhuman operation to be necessary for regenerating men. That those who were subjects of that operation were raised out of the natural state with which Butler seemed to be content. Such a reply, however convincing it may have been to the speaker, could not have crushed a man who had meditated so long and so deeply on the subject as Butler had meditated; who had felt that he should deny all moral obligations if he allowed evil to be the ground of that nature; who had learned so much from St. Paul's language respecting the Gentiles as to the untruth and danger of such a doctrine; lastly, who had made his profession of allegiance to the Church, the doctrines of which he was alleged to contradict, more deliberately than any of his fellows. But suggestions of this kind might have led him, may at all events lead us, to reflect whether human nature, if it is under the government of a moral being, does not imply a relation to that being; whether such a relation is not involved in the exercise of a conscience; whether, if it is, the description of conscience as an authority in the mind, may not be changed for another which is simpler and older, and at the same time is more in harmony with its witness; whether the deliverance and restoration of the conscience to its true state must not therefore imply a spiritual operation; whether that operation must necessarily import anything irregular, exceptional, anomalous; whether the regenerate man may not be, according to the scriptural and ecclesiastical idea, the true man; whether those who would represent humanity as if this were *not* its true type and condition are not as much obliged to set aside the announcements of divine revelation as all those evidences respecting it which Butler arrives at by a method distinct from revelation; whether those announcements and this evidence will not be found to confirm each other whenever the notion is abandoned, that the evil and separation from God, to which there is a tendency in all, is the law of any one human being. These questions are immensely more important and pressing in the nineteenth century than they were in the eighteenth. But it is not an anachronism to introduce them here, because they are directly suggested by the writings of Butler. and the events which were occurring in his day; and because, till they are fairly considered, he will never, we conceive, assume that place among ethical writers which is his right—will not be contemplated fairly in relation to his own time—will not confer the benefits which he might confer, on ours.

Why it would not have shaken Butler's belief.

How they may affect his statements.

The true humanity involves the superhuman.

Methodism in America.

35. John Wesley in the earlier stage of his life, George

Whitefield in his latest, visited the American colonies. On those who had received their religious and political life through Puritan settlers the influence of the latter was far more felt than that of the former, not only because they had both attained to convictions which were wanting in Wesley when he first went to Georgia; but because Whitefield sympathized with, and directly addressed himself to, the Calvinism which had been the strongest element in the belief of those who had left this country in the seventeenth century. If we judged from our English experience, we should have said that no time would be so unfavourable for steady philosophical thought as one of great religious fermentation; at any rate, that no persons were so little likely to enter upon trains of philosophical thought as those who were in the midst of this fermentation, who were the subjects of it, who were watching it with interest and sympathy even if some fears mixed with their satisfaction. But the phenomena of what is called the English religious revival do not answer to the corresponding one which took place in the American colonies. When the old Calvinism was awakened into life, and stirred to its depths, it came forth in connection with a very strong and definite form of philosophical speculation. The foundation of the literature of independent America was laid in a book which was published while it was still a subject of the British crown. Even at the end of a century, during which that literature has been sustained by much vigorous native genius, and has been cultivated by influences from France and Germany, as well as from the old country, the treatise of Jonathan Edwards on *The Freedom of the Will*, still remains its most original and in some respects its most important product.

The revival of Calvinism.

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758).

Freedom of the Will.

Accusation of dealing with metaphysics—of Stoicism—of Hobbism—

36. This treatise is essentially controversial. Its main object is to demolish the arguments raised by Arminians in Holland, in this country, or in America, against the doctrine of a supreme and absolute will in God, which decrees what men shall be, what blessings they shall receive, what punishments they shall undergo. The argument, of course, rests in part upon passages of Scripture which had been alleged in favour of human freedom, and upon those which the author produces on his own side. But Edwards is perfectly willing and perfectly able to meet his opponents on purely ethical and metaphysical grounds. He is quite aware that metaphysics are regarded with suspicion by religious people. He cannot help that. A name is nothing to him. If the subject is a metaphysical one, he must treat it metaphysically. Nor does he the least heed the imputation that his doctrine of predestination has some points of resemblance to the Stoical fate. He is not afraid to agree with the Stoics when the Stoics were right. Must not

his opponents sometimes resort to Epicurean arguments? And why should he be afraid of being confounded with Hobbes? He has never read Hobbes; but if he stumbles at any time into his phrases or modes of thought, so be it. If Hobbes pleads for a physical necessity, there is no resemblance between us; for we plead for a moral necessity. That distinction is to come out in our treatise. In the meantime we care nothing for bad names; let those who want such helps to their cause bestow them on us. This courage is characteristic of the author. It goes through his book. He states his propositions like a man who believes them, and who understands himself. There are no feeble qualifications, no paltry recantations, in one sentence of what has been boldly affirmed in the last. But though he is logical, and can trust his logic, he is far more really careful of the interests of morality than many who adopt a milder tone. An *absolute* being he must proclaim; the vision of a mere *arbitrary* being has no charms for him. Nay, he even wishes that his enemies should have the credit of that conception. Why do they complain of him for saying that he is limiting God when he speaks of a necessity in His acts? Do they worship one who is free from all obligation to be right and to do right?

Manliness of Edwards.

Asserts a moral, not a physical necessity.

Edwards to what extent an old Calvinist.

37. In all this one perceives the heir of old Puritans, who feared a living and righteous God; who could in His name bear much and do much; could suffer exile, and could build up societies full of stern strength and thrift; capable of heroism; capable also of perpetrating much savage cruelty in the name of religion. So long as Edwards adheres to this old standing ground we feel that he has an immense advantage in clearness, coherency, and solidity over those with whom he is contending. He is sure that there is a rock at his feet, and they are tempting him to a shifting sand of caprices and opinions. But Edwards, greatly as he admires the Reformers and Puritans, greatly as he wishes to restore and uphold their position, really forsakes that position, and by doing so, we think, makes his own a much feebler one. Belonging to the eighteenth century, to the time when happiness was represented as "our being's end and aim," his conception of God fades from that of a supremely righteous into a supremely "happy Being." We are not substituting a phrase of our own for his; it is the one he has chosen. And it is not (what phrase could be in so clear and logical a writer?) an insignificant one. It is the antecedent of a long series of consequences. This happy Being is removed from all participation in the miseries of His creatures. To conceive His bliss as in any way affected by them is impossible, is profane. Think what a rent must come from the mixture of this new cloth with the old garment? The righteous Being must desire righteous-

The eighteenth century grafted on the sixteenth.

The happy Being.

The confusion of two ideas.

ness; He must punish unrighteousness. But the serenely happy Being cannot be disturbed by the sight of what is wrong, cannot be afflicted by the sufferings of the wrongdoer. He can only rejoice that a law which He has created should execute itself. Think next of this conception standing side by side with the faith that the Man of sorrows is the express image of this Being; that He who bore all griefs for the sake of man is His only begotten Son. Think of it again by the side of the passionate zeal which Edwards himself felt that Whites and Red Indians also should be brought to a knowledge of righteousness. What happiness would he not have sacrificed, what death would he not have died, to produce that result which, according to this theory, the Supremely Happy, whose will is the only law of His creatures, did not or might not desire? Which of these two contrasts is the most appalling we scarcely dare to ask ourselves. We dwell upon the last because it shows what inward humanity, what a witness for the claims of all men, there might dwell in the hearts of those whose maxims seemed most incompatible with it; how much the belief in this case, as in all others, was grander than the theory; yet, to what terrible mental conflicts, what unutterable anguish, the struggle between them might give birth!

How it affects the Christian faith as such.

And the illustration of that faith in the life of Edwards.

The attempt to assert responsibility.

38. Nor is this the only instance in which the eighteenth century conception of morality exercises, as it seems to us, a most baneful influence over the venerable Augustinianism or Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards. He is most anxious to prove that his doctrine does not interfere with human responsibility, or even human liberty, in the right sense of the words responsibility or freedom. His great distinction of physical and moral necessity will be quite sufficient, he hopes, for this purpose. So long as he is occupied in refuting his opponent he uses that distinction ably and effectually. He has no difficulty in proving that Arminians had often shown a far weaker sense of moral obligations than their opponents—had often discovered a much more slavish habit of mind. He can trace both effects skilfully, if not satisfactorily, to their theories. But when the great distinction is to do its positive work—when the New England doctor undertakes to explain *what* choice men are able to exercise—*how* they become responsible for their failures—he has no resource but to introduce a machinery of motives which are presented to the man, which act first upon his understanding and then upon what is called his will. No doubt these motives interpose a convenient barrier between the will of man and the will of God. No doubt it may be a comfort to some to think, "We are not directly under the government of God; we are only under the government of Motives." But certainly an old

Motives.

How an old Puritan would have regarded them.

Puritan would not have found any comfort at all in the confession of such mediators. He would have said, "These motives are new gods, which our fathers knew not." He would have cried to the true God to break such idols in pieces. He would have asked—and Edwards's book, full as it is of texts, gives no answer—"What single text in the Bible bears witness in favour of them?" He could have asked—and Edwards's book, much as it appeals to the divinity of the Reformers, gives no answer—"What passage can be found expressive of their faith which does not interfere with this modern conception?" They said that man's will is enslaved by a multitude of confused motives; that God's will sets it free, and takes the rule over it. They might not be less vehement in their Augustinianism than Edwards. They might not, in some of their statements, be less exclusive. But their Augustinianism took a shape altogether different from his. Our experience would lead us to say, a far healthier form. The treatise on *The Freedom of the Will*, as a great philosophical and theological treatise, has had only an influence in England over a very limited circle. It has been presented to us in feeble dilutions, specially prepared for our market. But *this* part of his philosophy—*this* doctrine of motives—has had a most serious influence—a most debasing influence—on our religious morality in all directions. It has incorporated itself as easily into the Arminian as into the Calvinistical teaching. It has entered into alliance with the practical Mammonism which is undermining our national life. It has combined with the morbid tendencies of those who pore over their own mental conditions—hindering action, fostering superstition. All these consequences would have shocked Edwards; for many of them his copyists are mainly answerable. In his own country he retains, and must always retain, a great power. We should imagine that all American theology and philosophy, whatever changes it may undergo, and with whatever foreign elements it may be associated, must be cast in his mould. New Englanders who try to substitute Berkeley, or Butler, or Malebranche, or Condillac, or Kant, or Hegel, for Edwards, and to form their minds upon any of them, must be forcing themselves into an unnatural position, and must suffer from the effort. On the contrary, if they accept the starting point of their native teacher, and seriously consider what is necessary to make that teacher consistent with himself—what is necessary that the divine foundation upon which he wished to build may not be too weak and narrow for any human or social life to rest upon it—we should expect great and fruitful results from their inquiries to the land which they must care for most, and therefore to mankind.

No confirmation of the theory alleged from Scripture.

The doctrine of the Reformers opposed to it.

Effect of Edwards on this country.

His influence points to, and comes upon his own land.

Edwards, in what sense a rebel against Locke.

Edwards and Spinoza, wherein alike.

Naked Being, the divinity of Edwards.

The Absolute without the relative.

39. It would be wrong to dismiss this subject without alluding to two peculiarities of Edwards—if they can be distinguished from each other—which are indicated in his book on *The Freedom of the Will*, but which are more developed in some of his other treatises. The first is this: Edwards is, on the whole, a very faithful disciple of Locke. He refers to him frequently, scarcely ever dissenting from his conclusions—is thankful for his protection against the schoolmen and casuists, in most of whom he detects some Pelagian or semi-Pelagian poison. But Edwards departs from the fundamental maxim of Locke more curiously and significantly than any philosopher of the eighteenth century. The name *Being* has for him as much sacredness as it has for Spinoza. We purposely bring them together because, as no two thinkers were so unlike in their habits of mind and in their positive conclusions, their resemblance in this respect is the more striking. We have noticed already the weakening of this name, Being, by the unfortunate and Epicurean epithet, "happy," which Edwards has several times prefixed to it. We have hinted that the addition was to a certain extent involved in his theology, and that it had been fertile of moral, or as we should say, immoral, results. But that it *is* Epicurean is a proof that it does not belong to his deeper and truer mind, which was strictly and sternly Stoical. *Being*, in what we should call an awful nakedness, not unconnected surely (how can it be?) with life and action; not separated, as it is in Spinoza, from a personal will, but almost as separate from all relations, almost as far removed from humanity, as it is in his metaphysics—is the ground of the divinity of Edwards—is the ground also (subject to the exception we have just mentioned) of his ethics. For Being is not only with him that which is presupposed in all human life; it is also the main object which man is to set before him—the goal of all his desires and hopes.

German and Anglo-American affinities.

Edwards in sympathy with Roman Catholic mystics.

40. Those who carefully consider this observation will not be surprised that Americans trained in the school of Edwards should find some points of affinity with the German philosophy of our century; perhaps, if they hold their own ground firmly, and are not eager to give up the theology of their fathers for the sake of being called philosophers, they may both teach the Germans much, and profit by whatever they learn from them. But the second point to which we alluded is a point of affinity between Edwards and persons from whom he might seem to be even more hopelessly separated than from the Jew of Amsterdam, or from recent Rationalists. The doctrine that love to God must be disinterested; that no expectation of benefits from Him can mingle with it; that no dislike of punishment or suffering which He may inflict must interfere with it; that it

must rise above all mere gratitude, had been taught by Madame Guion, had been accepted by Fenelon. The impulse of Englishmen, perhaps of most Frenchmen, is to connect it with something of effeminacy. Our natural habit is to speak of Bossuet as masculine, of the Archbishop of Cambray as the victim of prophetesses, or of his own soft and sentimental nature.

Disinterested love connected with his worship of Being.

But what shall we say of this same doctrine when it encounters us in a philosopher preserving more than any other the original Protestant and Puritan type, far off from the sickly court atmosphere which may be supposed to have affected the constitution of the best instructor of a prince. Edwards, whatever else he wanted, was not wanting in the masculine sense and vigour which we attribute to Bossuet; this very sense and vigour—his aversion to all which merely depended upon changeable temperaments—appear to have brought him into sympathy with those whom Bossuet denounced.

A remedy for the diseases of the religious affections.

He was sensible to the perils of his own times and country; he feared greatly lest the religious excitement in his land, which he had hailed, and in which he had participated, should lead to flights of enthusiasm which would end as the flight of Icarus ended. The love of that which is good in itself, not of that which does us good—nay, the love of Being as Being—he demanded of himself, of all people who truly aspired to the Christian name. The test whether they possessed this love or not was that which he applied to all who spoke of their religious affections, and who believed that they had passed from a mundane into a spiritual state.

Edwards feels the tests most severe against himself.

If the test appeared to many hard and cruel, no one could say that Edwards laid a burden upon other men's shoulders which he did not take upon his own. To him, and to the disciples whom he trusted most, the question whether they possessed this disinterested love, was more torturing than it was to any whom he sought by the use of it to convict of insincerity. Certainly the torture was not less when the Being who was to be the object of the love was presented as perfectly "happy."

The cold happiness of the object makes the struggle of love more difficult.

That contentment, that want of sympathy with human anguish when it was most intense, surely made the struggle to love incomparably harder. Mere Being might be to Edwards—it was at times to Madame Guion—a calm resting-place, even though on one side it touches so closely upon the void of nothingness. A *righteous* being was to the man at least a true and infinite satisfaction.

Sympathy involved in righteousness.

But this was because there blended with the idea of righteousness the idea of sympathy—because it was impossible that a believer in Christ could divorce the one from the other. Had Edwards fully recognized the necessity of that union, had he made no violent intellectual efforts to divide what, if we simply accept the testimony of the books which he reverenced most, are inseparably one—would he have been obliged to make that an ordeal of fire to the feet, of water wherein only those who sunk were safe—that which might have been proclaimed as the repose to the weary, as the deliverance to the most sinful? Why talk of disinterested love till the poor phrase breaks down in the very effort to utter it, till the effort to realize its meaning becomes a self-interested effort to reach a height which under such conditions cannot be reached? If there is an object for such love—if, according to an eternal law, or, as Edwards says, a divine necessity, it is the object for all to seek, so far as they are true men—why not present the object to them, that it may be seen whether there is that in them which covets it and can embrace it? Was it not this that Edwards in his inmost heart wished to do? Should not his countrymen be trying to enter into his spirit, by inquiring how they may make his high morality effectual for daily use, how they may associate it with all the feeblest struggles of men to rise above their lowest appetites? Bossuet glorified the fear of punishment, the hope of reward. They were in danger of becoming the only powers which any man can acknowledge. Edwards would have recognized the same fears of punishment and hopes of rewards as the only influences which can act upon the great majority of men; the few were to be raised altogether above them. May it not be true that *every* man secretly desires the high reward of knowing what is good and of abiding in it; trembles at the fearful punishment of being left to himself? Might not all subordinate rewards and punishments be directed to the end of awakening this desire and this dread, rather than of stifling them, and providing an inadequate substitute for them?

The test of Edwards not as inhuman as it seems.

It need not take the form of a test, but of a satisfaction to human wants.

It may interpret, however, rewards and punishments, and make them its instruments.

41. There are no two metaphysicians in the eighteenth century so unlike each other as Jonathan Edwards and David Hartley; one a New England divine of the sternest Puritan stamp, and the other a physician of the old country, with many religious sympathies, but anticipating the downfall of religious systems, and specially averse from the views of the divine nature and of human destiny in which Edwards delighted. Nevertheless, they have points of resemblance. They were both believers in necessity; they were both disciples of Locke. Hartley is the more faithful disciple of the two. He would be quite faithful if he had not carried the studies of their common profession much farther than Locke carried them. These studies fix the character of Hartley's philosophy. His observations on man concern his "frame, his duty, and his expectations." But

David Hartley (1705-1757).

His philosophy determined by his profession.

Locke's difficulty.

Reflection—a reflection of what?

Association.

All our Ideas resolved into it; all our faculties formed by it.

the conditions of the frame determine the duty and expectations. On the first subject Hartley has something to tell us which he has observed and thought over. In treating of the two last he is not different from many who have treated them before and since. Locke had left us in some perplexity. We owe our ideas to our sensations. The ideas are not in us; they come to us from without. Out of the simple ideas arise complex ideas. *How* do they arise? Is there something in us which works up the raw material into an article which can be traded with? What is that something? Locke does not like to be cross-questioned on this point. He stammers, mutters the word "Reflection," and goes his way. Yes! says Hartley, reflection is very good provided I knew what the light is from which the reflection comes; otherwise it is merely embarrassing. I may lose all the fruits of my deliverance from the innate ideas. They may enter in again by a back door. Can I not close that door once and for ever? If I do but substitute the word "*Association*" for this word "*Reflection*," the door may be closed. The impressions which I receive through my senses will then not be defrauded of their rights under any pretext of some internal power in me which acts upon them, and reconstructs them according to its pleasure. The complex ideas will be the product of these first impressions according to a necessary law. The powers and faculties themselves, Memory, Understanding, Imagination, Affections, Will, can be all referred to them, and explained by them; in them the pains and pleasures which result not only from Sensation, but from Ambition, Self-Interest, Sympathy, Theopathy, and the Moral Sense (for all these Hartley admits to be genuine), must have their origin. By them we can explain all the phenomena of seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, handling; the motions of the heart, the sexual desires, words, and the ideas that are linked to them; the force of propositions, the nature of assent, the affections generally and each particularly.

Vibrations.

The brain, marrow, nerves.

42. This scheme at least promises to be comprehensive; Hartley is quite ready to unfold it step by step. He begins with his doctrine of *Vibrations*, which some have tried to divide from his doctrine of *Association*, not, we think, to the honour of the author's consistency, or to the real benefit of his readers. His first proposition is, *That the white medullary substance of the brain, spinal marrow, and the nerves proceeding from them, is the immediate instrument of sensation and motion.* The second brings us into the heart of his psychology. *That this white medullary substance is also the immediate instrument by which ideas are presented to the mind; or, in other words, whatever changes are made in this substance, corresponding changes are made in our*

ideas, and vice versa. The fourth is, *That external objects impressed upon the senses occasion, first in the nerves by which they are impressed, and then in the brain, vibrations of the small, and as one may say, infinitesimal medullary particles. These vibrations,* we are told in the next proposition, are kept up *partly by the ether, that is, by a very* subtle and elastic fluid, *and partly by the uniformity, continuity, softness, and active powers of the medullary substance of the brain, spinal marrow, and nerves.* Upon this foundation Hartley raised his second doctrine. *The sensory vibrations give birth to derivative vibrations, which may be called vibratiuncles, or miniatures corresponding to themselves respectively.* These vibratiuncles are the *simple ideas of sensation,* the vibrations being the sensations. *Any vibrations, A, B, C, &c., by being associated together a sufficient number of times, get such a power over a, b, c, &c., the corresponding minute vibrations, that any of the vibrations A, when impressed alone, shall be able to excite b, c, the miniatures of the rest. Thus simple ideas will pass into complex ones by means of association.*

The minor or secondary vibrations.

43. Here we have the ground principle; the rest is merely development. We are taught how these vibrations and associations explain all the different phenomena in the life of man, how simple and pure that life may become if all other explanations are discarded, and this is substituted for them. We must have learnt, before we have reached the eighteenth century, to expect such exclusiveness not less from moderate and tolerant men, such as Hartley has the fullest claim to be considered, than from the most bigotted and dogmatic. We ought to have courage not to be daunted by such pretensions, so far as they demand of us the sacrifice of convictions and discoveries which have been won for us by the toil and sweat of other men as earnest as he was; not to be offended by them so as to reject any lessons which have been imparted to him that we cannot derive as pointedly and distinctly from other sources. Hartley's physiology may be confirmed or confuted by modern knowledge; but, considered as the result of a series of experiments, it must be valuable. He may have succeeded or failed in his attempts to connect psychology with physiology; but he has made us feel that there is a connection between them which cannot be overlooked. He did not know (so he tells us, with evident truth) that his observations involved the belief in necessity; that belief gradually dawned upon him. None, we are convinced, was more valuable or important to his own mind. The notion that all thoughts, feelings, desires, hopes, are dependent upon certain vibrations in the white medullary substance of the brain would have been intolerable to a man so gentle and good as he was, if he had not been able to recognize a ground for this order, a key-

Hartley's doctrine as he states it all absorbing.

We need not yield to its exclusiveness

Yet we may be thankful for his observations.

His belief in necessity was belief in God.

note to this harmony. And his "Theopathy," as he calls it, or as we should have said, his old reverence for the God of his fathers, associated that idea of necessity with the confession of a living Being who had established these relations between the outward world and the creature that has organs for perceiving it. Through what vibrations or vibratiuncles that conviction came to him we do not care to inquire. We are satisfied that he had it, by whatever process he became possessed of it. If it was imparted to him through his anatomical studies, he affords another striking illustration of the way in which the divinest truths are brought home to men by means of their common occupations. If he could retain it along with the theory that the Understanding, the Thought, the Will, are merely portions of a great mechanism, that is a greater evidence of its power and stability than all the demonstrations by which ingenious men have sought to establish it. A majority, probably, of those who have followed his track of thought have considered his Theopathy and his Christianity were rather extraneous grafts upon the rest of his teaching. It has puzzled them to discover what these had to do with the spinal marrow or the white medullary substance of the brain. But there have been others, and perhaps more than we know of, who have taken, along with the associations and the vibrations, Hartley's whole conception of a moral sense which recognizes beauty and revolts at deformity, and his belief of a divine revelation which touches chords that respond to it in the nature of man. Some have for a time been enabled through him to attain perceptions of the harmony of the world which have afterwards blended with principles that seem most to clash with his. And perhaps his illustrations of the facts of association will be welcomed most cordially by those who most demand a ground for association which he has not discovered to them. Perhaps the moralist and metaphysician are destined to receive the greatest aid from the anatomist and physiologist in tracing the vibratiuncles in the human body to those vibrations which they find first within, and which are produced, as their hearts tell them, by an invisible Musician.

His method of arriving at his belief not to be condemned.

His disciples.

Richard Bentley.

44. Before we leave the English thinkers of the first half of the eighteenth century, it is right that we should speak of a man to whom we have alluded slightly in that character in which he most nearly concerns our subject, but who in his other and proper character is better known to foreigners than almost any of those whose names we have introduced. As a Boyle lecturer, who undertook to refute Spinoza and Hobbes, we suspect that Richard Bentley is not much remembered by Germans or by Frenchmen. As the founder of a school of criticism, as the

skilful and courageous sifter of documents, as the exposer of forgery, as the daring corrector of passages in books which he would have been not only unable to write but of which he had only an imperfect appreciation, he is known to all the scholars, almost to the school-boys, in those nations. And we are approaching a time in which the criticism of documents becomes closely blended with moral and metaphysical questions,—so blended that the most difficult problems of moral and metaphysical philosophy often turn upon the question what its relation to documents is; how far it exists independently of them. Philology was to be the occupation of the next age, no less than physical science. The limits of each were to be asserted; each was to be in some measure a balance to the other. And in a very remarkable sense criticism was to find its way into the heart of philosophy itself; that was to be "nothing if not critical." Richard Bentley, therefore, becomes in every respect an important name in our sketch, both because he carried the experimental method, which was the method of the age, into a new region, and because he left behind some examples and some warnings as to the right and wrong use of this method. He showed that it must be applied freely and manfully if it is applied at all; he showed, by his failures as well as his successes, that reverence for an author—for any author whatsoever, be it Horace or Milton—is not a restraint upon sound criticism, but is an indispensable condition of it. He showed that the practical habits which belong to an Englishman—his acquaintance with law courts, and with the rules by which lawyers and men of the world try the truth of testimony—may be of the greatest worth in correcting the formal canons of schoolmen, may often give them quite a new character, and prevent them from leading to utterly false conclusions. But he showed also, that this experience may be purchased very dearly; that the man of letters who aspires to be the man of affairs may become involved in petty quarrels and litigations, which weaken the moral strength if they cultivate the acuteness of his mind. A union of his amazing erudition, minute perception, and practical force, with really high aims, would constitute a critic such as the world has not yet seen.

In what character known to foreigners.

Criticism acquiring a new importance.

Bentley's example and warning.

Bentley's English qualities.

45. But though Bentley's name is of great collateral importance, Hartley winds up the history of English philosophy in the half century which followed Locke. "How," it may be asked, "have the doings of this half century justified the prominence which has been given to the philosopher of Wrington? Has any eminent thinker, in the course of it, remained within his positions? Has not every one been obliged to assail some of them? The very Theism which was the postulate of the time—which

How far the inquiries of this half century can be traced to Locke.

Their apparent departure from his maxims.

none of those who most protested against any religion but natural religion assailed—could not be traced to any of Locke's maxims; all that can be said is, that those maxims had not as yet been perceived to stand in any antagonism to it. Shaftesbury's reverence for a chivalrous ideal, Pope's reverence for order, were not derived from the *Essay on the Human Understanding.* Berkeley's protest on behalf of spirit can scarcely have been inspired by a doctrine which refers all the movements of our understanding to sense. Butler's recognition of a conscience disturbs rather than confirms the Lockian faith. The Divine Will of Edwards has no natural connection with it; his language respecting Being is positive heresy against its fundamental article. And Hartley, that he may establish the Lockian doctrine of sensation, is obliged to throw aside his doctrine of reflection." All this is true; yet it does not shake, but deepen our conviction, that Locke marked out the course which inquiries were to take, and must of necessity take, in this time, and that any course but his would have been barren of results. Every one of the men of whom we have spoken implicitly—nearly every one formally—confesses this to be the case. Those who are least like Locke in temper of mind or in their objects, still make obeisance to him, and exhibit signs of trembling when they announce any dissent from him. This common instinct in persons so different from each other—with prejudices, political and religious, adverse to his—must indicate that he had given a direction to the thought of the time from which it could not go very far astray. That direction it is not difficult to indicate. The tentative experimental method had nearly superseded every other. Logic was discredited. Mathematics retained a certain hold, from their connection with physics; but their use in moral questions began to be suspected; the moralists ever now and then threw in rash doubts about the grounds on which their evidence rested. Physics were always threatening to govern the whole region of morals; but the moralists maintained a strong protest, and could appeal even to the practical English feeling against a tendency which it promoted; for how could rigid physical laws avail us in daily emergencies? Scepticism was thus stronger than dogmatism; but scepticism had its limits,—partly from old traditions, partly from the new strength which had been won for the conclusions of science. Locke himself had done a partial homage to both; he was not really devoted to either; he wished to maintain a kind of practical English position between them: if that position was tenable on his terms, it was well; other men were to ascertain by different trials how it could be maintained—what help it might need from belief—what from science. We cannot but

His influence acknowledged by all.

Summary of the characteristics of the times in England.

Locke's position between traditional belief and science.

feel ever grateful to Locke for having originated that inquiry—for having urged his countrymen to persevere in it, till they came to some satisfactory result. Every experiment, we believe, of this time in philosophy, and every religious movement in the world that stood most apart from philosophy, was leading to this result. We cannot think that any were wasted—that any, if they seemed for a moment most discouraging or most dangerous, could have been spared.

Toleration.

Locke's Essay: its great value.

Objections to it.

The practical reply to them.

46. For the freedom with which those inquiries, on the whole, were conducted, for the absence of any check upon them from governments, many thanks also are due to Locke. Very different opinions may be entertained about the grounds upon which he rested his plea for toleration. Those grounds, like all others, were to be submitted to severe experiment. But the plea itself had been of the greatest value. No doubt it conspired with the circumstances and tendencies of an age which had exhausted itself in abortive attempts to control opinion, and which craved for rulers who should devote themselves to another problem than that of fixing it. But an expression was wanted for this desire—an expression which should not appeal to any obscure principle—which should be little more than the statement of a fact—the condensation of a number of experiences. The *Essay on Toleration* was such an expression. It was an easy manual for statesmen. If they were besieged by the demands of sects or of churchmen for persecutions in their interests, they could set them to answer Locke's book. If such an answer had been produced, it would have turned, we may be sure, upon the mischief which arises from supposing that there is nothing certain; that truth has not been found already; that it is safe to leave all things which have been once delivered to the risks of human search—to the possibilities of denial. Whatever rejoinder any disciple of Locke might have made to such objections, we believe that the true reply to them is written with the finger of God upon the page of history. If there were truths once delivered to men, those truths would certainly make themselves manifest—not without experiments, but through experiments; not when the experiments were in any wise checked or directed by human authority; but when they were pursued most vigorously and in all directions; when all mistakes, confusions, contradictions, were left to neutralize each other, and to prove how much the truth was stronger than all of them. To doubt this is most natural and reasonable for those who doubt the existence of anything but a human authority—who suppose that that must at last have the disposing of events or the regulation of thoughts. It is only unnatural, unreasonable, impious, for those who believe in a God of truth—who hold that

His will and His reason must overcome all that is opposed to them. But since such impiety springs up very readily in us all, we may be thankful when any passages in records which all may read expose its folly. The English records of the first part of the eighteenth century supply as much evidence of this kind as any. We dwell upon the eminent names in that period—upon Butler's, for instance—with a pride and fondness that are not undeserved, and that cannot easily be exaggerated. Do we forget that Butler would not have written if there had not been attacks upon the idea of God as a moral governor—if there had not been the denial of a conscience? Do we forget that his assertion of a moral government and of a conscience would have been utterly worthless—utterly ridiculous—if these denials had been suppressed, or if he had gone forth with policemen or a troop of horse to defend them? Do we forget that he was pleading for principles which, as he affirmed, were contained in the revelation which was accepted by the country at large—which were implied in all its institutions—and yet that they needed to be tried afresh, to be brought to the test of facts, because such numbers who nominally adhered to that revelation, and were themselves administering those institutions, practically set them at nought? And this evidence is all the stronger if it be true, as we have endeavoured to show, that neither Butler nor Berkeley, nor any of the so-called apologists of this time, have been chiefly valuable in *that* character; that as mere pleaders they have often been betrayed into the use of arguments which have afterwards proved damaging to their own cause; that it is as searchers after principles, and asserters of principles, that they deserve the gratitude of mankind.

Evidence from the apologists.

Truths that are received need investigation more than any.

47. There is, however, an argument in favour of the oversight of opinions by governments—at all events of the duty of churches to suppress such as are inconvenient, which stands quite apart from any considerations respecting truth as such, and the insults which our patronage may offer to it. Such noblemen and gentlemen, it is said, as professed infidelity in the days of the two first Georges—such metaphysicians as chose to work for them and with them—might be safely left to amuse themselves, or to profit as they might by any written confutations of them. But the great mass of the people, who could not think, were entitled to a watchful consideration, which on these men, if their own interests only were at stake, might be wasted. They ought to be hindered from raising doubts which they could not settle—from disturbing the quiet faith of those who were restrained by that faith from outrages upon the property of their richer neighbours—perhaps upon the safety of the State. That considerations of this kind, so plausible, so well

The plea for paternal governments; case of the lower orders.

A plausible one in the eighteenth century.

suited to a time which was extremely ignorant of all that concerned the unknown masses which lay out of the civilized circle, did not give birth to any plans of coercion by the State—only to some foolish cruelties of the Church against its own members, as in the case of Whiston—is a cause for great thankfulness. For it was soon shown in the Methodist movement that it was not acquiescence, but disturbance, which was needful for these masses of people; that they needed a belief as a substitute for acquiescence—a belief which could only be acquired through doubts and strifes more serious and profound than those of cultivated men—if they were not to be dangerous to society and to themselves. Much persecution of a certain kind was perpetrated under the authority of public opinion. Many acts were enjoined by lynch law against the Methodist enthusiasm. It was proved that the habit of toleration which Locke had encouraged was not sufficient to prevent acts of intolerance against those who were suspected of intolerance. But that governments became impressed with the folly and madness of interfering, under one pretext or another, for the suppression of thought, is one of the main reasons why England passed through this period, and a far more critical period which was coming, without the same political and spiritual convulsion which every nation on the continent was to undergo. It cannot be pretended that England was saved from these dangers because she was free from the unbelief in Christianity which we sometimes suppose to have characterized France and Germany. She was the precursor of both in that unbelief. So far as their philosophy was concerned, they derived their unbelief mainly from her. Any resistance to it came from themselves, not from us. As little can it be said that when this deism passed into atheism we were free from the infection—that that did not manifest itself in our speculations—that that did not affect our practice. But there was no violent repression. The cause of God was not snatched out of His hands, as if He were unable to take care of it. From that depth of practical atheism we were mercifully delivered. Other countries were left to feel the effects of it for awhile. What those effects were—what share philosophy had in producing them—what share in averting them—what relation they had to the life of the highest orders of the state and to the lowest—to schools, and kingdoms, and churches,—we have now to consider.

Refuted by its experience.

Benefits of toleration to English faith and life.

Influence of England on other lands.

France.

48. There was one country in which the policy of repression had been tried most systematically, and it would appear, most victoriously. Louis XIV. had crushed the Jansenists, had expelled the Protestants. If the last act was aimed mainly at those who were associating the industry of the country

The Jesuits.

Defeat of the Jansenists.

Jesuit war with Descartes and Malebranche.

with heresy, the first was aimed at those who were infusing what the court considered a more subtle heresy into its education. That body which directed the conscience of the king, and which, from its perfect organization, and its diffusion through every province of the land, was the most powerful agent for giving effect to the decrees which it suggested, had a heavier complaint against the Port-Royal than that it had produced the *Lettres Provinciales.* It had intruded upon their own three chosen functions as preachers, confessors, teachers. Jansenist sermons had stirred the consciences of princes of the blood; Jansenist directors had been sought by ladies who desired to begin a new life; above all, there was a conspiracy to fill the schools of France with books and methods of study quite unlike those which the Society of Jesus had sanctioned. Such rivals must be defeated by extermination, if milder measures were unavailing. For was it not the soul of the country which the disciples of Loyola had undertaken to govern and discipline? What availed it to put down the assemblies of rebels against ecclesiastical authority — the outward profession of strange opinions—if the Catholic mind was withdrawn from their surveillance, if it was allowed to put forth an independent activity? And others than Jansenists, even those who had least sympathy with them, might do this mischief. Descartes had desired an alliance with the Sorbonne. He had been suspected in Protestant Holland. He had been refused a title in Protestant Sweden. His royal pupil had become a convert. Malebranche had been engaged in a bitter controversy with Arnauld; he had attacked the Port-Royal doctrine of grace. Were not these claims at least upon Jesuit toleration, if not sympathy? No claims at all. So early as the year 1675 a royal decree was obtained against Cartesianism; how it was enforced against Malebranche within the order is made known to us by a curious series of letters first published in 1843, for which, as for so many other signal services to the history of philosophy in his own and other lands, we are indebted mainly to M. Cousin.

Le Père André.

49. These are the letters of Le Père André, a Breton, born in 1675, who entered the Jesuit order in 1693; who studied theology at the college of Clermont in Paris; who died in 1763. That he wrote a *Treatise on the Beautiful;* that he was a great admirer of Malebranche; that he had prepared materials for a biography of him; and that the biography never appeared; was known before. The new letters discover to us a man of deep earnestness, of a most affectionate nature, a thoroughly devout Christian, engaged in a struggle for that to which he believed that he owed his very life. He writes to Malebranche, not as

one who has slavishly adopted his system, but as one who has learnt from him—just as Malebranche learnt from Descartes—to believe the doctrines which he professed; to receive them as truths into his heart, not as words and notions to be deposited in the memory. He is suspected; is removed from one college to another; is watched as a dangerous man wherever he goes; is called to pronounce his guide and friend a heretic. He remonstrates, argues, produces all the obvious proofs of the attachment, the passionate attachment, of Malebranche to the faith of the Church. All is unavailing: the society has resolved that no Cartesian shall be found within its borders. Then come the usual conflicts. André is sincerely attached to his order; he would not sacrifice his vow of obedience for any private opinions—for any earthly consideration. But truth is paramount; he cannot say that he believes that to be evil which he has found to be good; he cannot slander a dear friend. Other figures come upon the scene. André is not the only infected person. There are those about him who have found in Malebranche what he has found—the first living instructor in the Christian faith, the man who has shown that there was a divine and eternal ground upon which they could stand, a divine life which they might live. There is one who exulted in calling himself a Malebranchist; delivered his opinions in their most ultra form; expressed the greatest contempt for those who set them at nought. He, as we might expect, at the first real prospect of persecution, became doubtful; was speedily convinced of his error; and was in a short time able to denounce triumphantly those who had shared it with him. Some simply said that they had supposed Malebranche to be a good Catholic, that the society thought otherwise, and that, of course, the society was right. More skilful reasoners met André half-way. Was the question worth raising a storm about? Malebranche might be right or wrong about ideas. Who knows? Is it a matter of faith? They loved André too much, they said, to part with him; why would he be obstinate? Such appeals to his modesty and affection wrought only too much with him. He wavered; he was tempted at one time to sign a formulary against which his conscience afterwards rebelled. He was ready to give up metaphysics for mathematics or for simple preaching. But fortunately, the majority of his advisers took a different tone. Some were merely worldly; it was best, they thought, on divine and human grounds, to follow the dictates of prudence; that was evidently their god. The most elaborate of his adversaries, who wrote in the name of the society but suppressed his own, spoke of Malebranche as a fanatic without originality, a mere plagiarist from Descartes, only more dangerous. And

Owes all his faith to Malebranche.

Is called to pronounce him a heretic.

Other heretics about him.

Efforts at conversion.

Ideas. then he proceeded, with very fair ingenuity, to build up the Aristotelian theory of representative ideas. Such arguments could only strengthen the resolution or stir up the indignation of André. He strove to keep down his anger; his faith in Malebranche remained unshaken. The more he saw of the Jesuit education, the more unreal and mischievous it seemed to him. The best thing a scholar can do, he said, if he wishes to be a good and wise man, is to forget all he has learned amongst us. He attributed much of the mischief to the doctrine that ideas are images on the brain, not principles which are the grounds of our mind. He wished to restore education by teaching his pupils to think, as Descartes and Malebranche had taught him to think. A strange desire just at the time when the reforms in education were to take their commencement from the other end; just when Locke was affirming that the end from which Descartes had started was the wrong one. André had still other troubles to go through. The charge of Cartesianism gave place to the charge of Jansenism. On the whole, he held on his course bravely under both. And he has left documents behind him which are valuable as encouragements and warnings to all who are placed in circumstances in any degree similar to his; still more valuable because they discover to us the background of a picture, the prominent objects in which become confused and unintelligible to us when our eyes are fixed only upon them.

Education.

Value of hese letters or the iistory.

Peter Bayle.

50. Another figure in this background is the author of the *Dictionary*, Peter Bayle. Some would assert that he ought not to be so placed; that we are entering upon an age of scepticism; that he, above all men, deserves the name of sceptic; that Leibnitz, who must be a good judge, treated him as the writer who was most likely to have a sceptical influence upon his time. No doubt Bayle had a preparation for scepticism which few men of that or any time have had, though many may have had a training not unlike his. Bred a Calvinist from his youth up; initiated into all the controversies of Protestants with each other—of Protestants with Romanists; learning to view all these as subjects for study; less and less feeling that they had any connection with himself; led to Romanism, some would say from baser motives, much more probably from the discontent and restlessness which ask for an authority to fix them in a home somewhere; not finding in it the authority which could fix him, the home which he wanted—once more returning to the house he had left, and finding it empty, swept, and garnished; then undertaking a task for which few were equally qualified by their erudition, to record the experiences of all who had gone before him; how philosophers and theologians had sought for some system to satisfy

His education.

His changes.

His *Dictionary*.

them; how each had contradicted the other; how each had failed of his own purpose: putting these observations into a shape which is indicative of the want of harmony in the mind that had collected them—the little lines of text sustaining the endless documents and speculations of the notes: he comes forth before us the mournful preacher, that the further we explore the kingdom of earth or the kingdom of heaven, the less of a firmament shall we discover, the more shall we see only a waste of waters above and beneath. To a man occupied as we shall presently find that Leibnitz was, such a vision may have seemed a dangerously attractive one. Having traversed so much of the same ground as Bayle, we need not wonder that he should fancy his doctrines to be those against which the age had most need to be protected. The opinion shows how truly he was a German Protestant; how little he entered into the feelings of the land in the language of which he wrote; else he would have perceived that a man so purely a bookwright—so unsymmetrical as a bookwright—could not have any powerful hold upon the Frenchmen of the eighteenth century. They craved, above all things, for a deliverance from the pedantry of books, for a philosophy and a literature which should be the faithful expression of all that was passing in the salons, and in the hearts and minds—or whatever was a substitute for hearts and minds—of those who frequented them. It was not impossible that Frenchmen should seek in a Protestant country for something to imitate, something even to exchange for what had prevailed in their own country. But whatever lessons they obtained, we may be sure, would be of a practical kind. Speculation might be received so far as it was practical; but it would be received to be remoulded—to be put into more agreeable, more intelligible forms—divested of everything that was characteristic of the Reformation. When it received its French impression it would bear on it the clearest tokens that France was a Roman Catholic country, and had been subject to Jesuit influences.

The result.

Why he could not be the person to lead Frenchmen in the eighteenth century.

What France demanded then.

51. And where, then, are we to look for the foremost figure in this age, if learned Malebranchists and learned sceptics only appear in the distance? In the year 1726, when Newton was approaching his last days; while Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Pope, were in their glory; while Walpole was reigning over the House of Commons; there appeared in London a man about thirty-two years of age, bearing two names,—one, that of his father, a respectable citizen; the other derived, it is said, from a small estate of his mother's, who belonged to an aristocratical family in Poitou. This M. Arouet or Voltaire had every claim to distinction in England. He was the author of two successful tragedies; he had produced what was regarded in France as *the*

Voltaire (1694).

Voltaire in England.

modern Epic; he had been admired by some of the most conspicuous ladies in his own land; he had just escaped from a very unjust confinement in the Bastile. With the quickest eye, he detected what was most curious and most worthy to be observed in the island in which he had taken refuge. He made acquaintance, of course, with all the literary celebrities; he compared the ancient barbarism of the Shakespearian drama with its improvements under Congreve and Addison; he studied the constitution of Parliament and its condition under the Whig ministry; he contrasted the country of merchants with the country of nobles. He considered that peculiarity of our character which made us voluntarily submit to the small-pox, that we might avert its more virulent attacks. He understood very rapidly the doctrines and order of the English Church; how it was related to the Kirk of Scotland; how it was affected by the position of the English Nonconformists. He paid special attention to the Society of Friends. He settled the claims of Bacon; admired what he had been able to effect in a barbarous age; ridiculed his superstition. He devoted himself to the theory of attraction; equitably arranged the respective pretensions of Newton and Descartes; ascertained Locke to be the first of philosophers. All this was done, not for his own entertainment, but for the enlightenment of France. As soon as he returned he published a series of *Lettres sur les Anglais.* They produced the liveliest sensation in Paris. They had soon the honour of being denounced in the Parliament of Paris and burnt publicly, according to the wise custom which prevailed then in both countries, and from which both parties in England had suffered in turn. The letters afterwards became *Lettres Philosophiques.* Most of them, after undergoing some changes, appeared subsequently as articles in the *Encyclopédie.*

His diligence in sight-seeing.

Observations on English religion.

His letters on England.

Effect of these letters.

52. As a series of clever and brilliant pictures of England in the eighteenth century, these letters might have an interest for us. They might often instruct us more than native reports, or reports with the sentiments of which we had greater sympathy. But their importance to Frenchmen is far greater. Condorcet has no hesitation in speaking of them as main instruments in promoting a "revolution" of opinions, as determining what the tone of French philosophy in the eighteenth century was to be. It becomes us to accept this testimony all the more because it proceeds from a man who, perhaps, would have preferred a somewhat more formal and erudite treatment of the subjects which are handled in the letters—at least of those which involve long controversies and points of history. But he was evidently convinced that Voltaire deserved the name of "Patriarch," which the Encyclopedists subsequently bestowed on him, mainly because he handles all topics in the style of which we are about to give

Condorcet's testimony.

Voltaire on Locke.

The Greek philosophy.

Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates, fools; the last probably a knave also.

The fathers and schoolmen.

Descartes.

a specimen from the epistle *Sur M. Locke.* Voltaire begins with saying that there never was a more logical mind than Locke's; that there never was a more accurate logician; that he did not, however, "submit to the fatigue of calculations or the dryness of mathematical truths; that he had proved how possible it was to have the geometrical spirit without resorting to geometry." "Before him the great philosophers had decided positively what the soul of man is; but as they knew nothing whatever about it, they all, as might be expected, held different opinions." This proposition is illustrated, and the whole philosophy of Greece, the fathers, and the schoolmen, is despatched in the next few paragraphs. "In Greece, the cradle of arts and of errors, where the greatness and the folly of the human mind were pushed to their furthest possible extremes, there were as many discussions about the soul as among us. The divine Anaxagoras, to whom an altar was dedicated, because he taught men that the sun was larger than the Peloponnesus, that snow was black, and that the heavens were of stone, affirmed that the mind was ethereal, and nevertheless immortal. Diogenes (not the same with the man who turned cynic after he had failed as a coiner) was confident that the mind was a part of the substance of God; and this idea was at all events brilliant. Epicurus made it consist of parts like the body. Aristotle, who has been explained in a thousand ways, because he was unintelligible, believed, if we may trust some of his disciples, that the understanding of all men was one and the same substance. The divine Plato, master of the divine Aristotle, and the divine Socrates, master of the divine Plato, called the soul corporeal and eternal. No doubt the demon of Socrates had informed him what it was. There are people, I own, who are bold enough to say that a man who boasted of having a familiar genius was indisputably somewhat of a fool or somewhat of a rogue; but these people are hard to please. As to the fathers of the Church, many in the first ages have believed the human soul, the angels, and God corporeal. The world is always advancing in refinement. St. Bernard, according to the confession of Père Mabillon, taught, in respect of the soul, that after death it did not see God in heaven, but only the humanity of Jesus Christ. For this once his word was not taken to be law. The second crusade had a little discredited his oracles. A thousand schoolmen came afterwards: the impregnable doctor, the subtle doctor, the angelical doctor, the seraphic doctor, the cherubic doctor,—who were all quite certain that they understood the soul thoroughly, but contrived to speak as if they desired that no one else should understand anything of it. Our Descartes, born to discover the errors of the ancients, and to substi-

Voltaire on innate ideas.

The romancers and the historian.

Explanation of Locke's process.

What he accomplished.

tute for them errors of his own—seduced by that desire of system which blinds the greatest men—fancied that he had proved that the soul was the same thing as the thought, just as matter, according to him, is the same thing as extension. He was thoroughly convinced that the soul came into the body possessed of all metaphysical notions—knowing God, Space, the Infinite—having all abstract ideas, full of beautiful knowledges, which, unfortunately, were forgotten in the process of coming out of the womb. Father Malebranche, in his sublime illusions, not only does not admit innate ideas" (we presume he means as our own), "but had no doubt that we see all in God, and that God, so to speak, is our soul. All these reasoners have written the Romance of the soul; a sage is now at last to produce, in a modest style, its history. Locke has discovered the human reason to man, just as an excellent anatomist explains the springs of the body. He is always glad to profit by the torch of physical science; he has the courage sometimes to speak affirmatively; he has the courage also to doubt. Instead of putting at once into definitions that which we know not, he examines step by step what we wish to know. He takes an infant at the moment of its birth; he follows step by step the progress of its learning; he perceives what it has in common with the lower animals, and what it has that is above them; he consults on all occasions his own testimony, the consciousness of his thought." Then, having quoted a well-known passage, in which Locke says that he does not know whether the soul exists after or before the origination of the body; that he is one of those vulgar people who own that they do not think always, and who cannot conceive that it is more needful for the soul to be always thinking than for the body to be always moving, he goes on,—"For myself, I claim the honour of being in this matter as childish as Locke. No one shall make me believe that I am always thinking; and I do not feel myself more disposed than he was to imagine that certain weeks after my conception I was a very learned soul, knowing then a thousand things that I forgot when I was born, and having in the uterus a quantity of knowledge which departed from me as soon as I wanted it, and which I have never been able to recover since. Locke then, after having overthrown innate ideas—after having disclaimed the vanity of believing that he was always thinking—having thoroughly established a doctrine that our ideas come through our senses—having examined our simple ideas and our complex ideas—having followed the mind of man in all its operations—having shown us how imperfect are the tongues which men speak, and how they are deceived by the terms they are using,—Locke, I say, comes to consider the extent, or rather the nothing-

His wise diffidence: what hostility it provoked.

ness of human knowledge. It is in this chapter that he is so bold as modestly to put forward these words,—"*We shall never, perhaps, be capable of knowing if a being purely material thinks or not.*" This wise statement appeared to more than one theologian a scandalous declaration, that the soul is material and mortal. Certain Englishmen, devout in their fashion, sounded the alarm. Such people are in a society what the timid are in an army —they feel and they create a panic. The cry was raised that Locke wished to overthrow religion. Religion had nothing to do with the matter. It was a purely philosophical question, wholly independent of revelation. The question might be discussed without any bitterness, whether there is any contradiction in saying,—Matter can think; God can communicate thought to matter. But the theologians begin too often with assuming that God is outraged by any one who is not of their opinion." He proceeds to argue the question about the soul through two or three pages, which we do not quote, but to which the reader can turn; and concludes thus,—"Moreover, we ought never to fear that any philosophical sentiment can injure the religion of a country. Our mysteries may very well be contrary to our demonstrations. They are not the less received on that account by our Christian philosophers, who know that the objects of reason and of faith are of a different nature. The philosophers will never form a religious sect. Why? Because they do not write for the people, and because they are without enthusiasm. Divide the human race into twenty parts; nineteen consists of those who work with their hands, and who will never know whether there has been a Mr. Locke in the world. In the twentieth part which remains, how many are there who read? And among those who read, there are twenty who read romances for one who studies philosophy. The number of those who think is excessively small, and those do not care to trouble the world. It is neither Montaigne nor Locke, nor Bayle, nor Spinoza, nor Hobbes, nor Lord Shaftesbury, nor Mr. Collins, nor Mr. Toland, nor Fludd, nor Baker, who have carried the torch of discord into their countries. Those who have done so have been, for the most part, theologians, who, having first aspired to be chiefs of sects, have afterwards aspired to be chiefs of parties. What do I say? All the books of the modern philosophers taken together will never make as much noise in the world as was made in former days by the dispute of the Cordeliers about the shape of their sleeves and their hoods!"

Philosophers cannot hurt the religion of a country.

The real disturbers of the peace.

This letter useful in correcting our judg-

53. That this is a classical passage, and that it behoved us to make it an exception to our rule of not indulging in long quotations in this part of our sketch, the reader must see for himself,

even if he had not the high authority of Condorcet to sustain his opinion. It deserves to be produced, if for no other reason, because it scatters some loose notions which attach themselves in the minds of Englishmen of the present day to the name of Voltaire. (1.) They often picture to themselves a man fighting fiercely against religion, because that of his country, and those of all countries, limit the claims and aspirations of the human reason, which it behoved his generation specially to uphold. No representation can be less true. He scouts and scorns the claims and aspirations of the human reason to examine the questions which it had presumed in former days to examine. Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, are as contemptible in his eyes, and for the same reason, as the fathers, as Bernard, and as the schoolmen. In fact, a great many of the exposures of the follies of philosophers, of their contradictions, of the hopelessness of their endeavours to arrive at any results, which are found in English religious books, and are thought by the writers of them to establish the worth and authority of the Scriptures—most especially their sneers at the demon of Socrates—are plagiarisms, conscious or unconscious, at first, or second, or third, or fourth hand, from this passage of Voltaire. Denuded of much of his wit and cleverness, undoubtedly, but preserving his indifference to the dullness and dreariness of fact—there appear from time to time in popular manuals written in defence of the faith, those very statements which obtained so ready an access for Voltaire's opinions to the salons of Paris, and which helped to prepare the way for his general triumph. (2.) The second mistake which we make is, that we stigmatize as essentially and originally French philosophy, that which was confessedly derived from England, and was a rebellion against that which France had and has a right to vindicate as her own. The language of Voltaire respecting Descartes and Malebranche, who had agreed with all previous philosophers to compose the romance of the soul, compared with what he says of Locke, who was the first to write its history, is evidence upon this point; further is unnecessary. (3.) On a third point further evidence *is* necessary, seeing that Frenchmen of great name and authority have assisted in misleading us respecting it. Condorcet, in his life of Voltaire, represents the acceptance by Voltaire of the doctrine of Locke respecting innate ideas as a main cause of the persecution which his letters underwent from the Parliament of Paris, and from the clergy. He leaves the impression upon our minds that the clerical influence of that day, whether it was a Jesuit or Jansenist influence, was exerted in favour of Descartes and Malebranche, however those writers may have been disliked in the former century for their opposition

ment of the author.

He wishes to restrain, not enlarge the bounds of human inquiry.

English divines have copied his sarcasms on ancient philosophers.

The grounds of the philosophy of the *Encyclopédie* not French, but English.

Vie de Voltaire, p. 153 (prefixed to Beuchot's edition of the *Œuvres de Voltaire*, tom i., Paris, 1834).

Objections to the statement that Voltaire was persecuted in the interest of Descartes or Malebranche,

to the schoolmen. Now, though we ignorant islanders ought to be very diffident in contradicting an illustrious Frenchman when he is speaking about his own country, this is an opinion which we are bound utterly to reject, partly upon the undoubted testimony of documents which Condorcet did not know, partly for its intrinsic unreasonableness. The "former times," when innate ideas were treated as a heresy, must have been the times when Bossuet and Arnauld were both, though not disciples of Malebranche, yet confessed disciples of Descartes; the latter times, in which the doctrines of Descartes and Malebranche had become articles of faith which all religious people must accept at their peril, were those times in which the Père André was persecuted by the most powerful and popular of all religious societies for holding those very doctrines of Descartes and Malebranche! And if it were pretended that the Jansenists in the eighteenth century—the century of their weakness—represented the popular Christianity, is it likely that *they* would canonize Malebranche, notoriously the opponent of their great apostle, Arnauld? Is it not far more likely that they would overlook the distinction which Arnauld very carefully made between Malebranche and the master to whom he appealed on all occasions, and would be willing to blend them in a common condemnation? Seeing, therefore, that this would be the one point on which the two schools would *not* be at variance, it is rather hard to conceive what clerical party could condemn Voltaire for this portion of his opinions. Surely there was enough in the tone of his letters generally, in the tone of *that* letter, which indicated utter contempt for fathers and schoolmen, profound admiration for the enemy of absolute government, the apologist of William III., to provoke the hostility of the priests, to account for the readiness of ministers of State to co-operate with them, though we do not suppose that they felt themselves obliged to fight the battles of Descartes, a nearer and older foe than Locke. Voltaire no doubt earned the dislike of his old masters, the Jesuits—earned it by the most creditable acts of his life. His dislike of oppression as such, the sympathy with the oppressed as such, which Condorcet attributes to him, and which we have no doubt that he possessed strongly—without which, indeed, we cannot believe that any talents or any circumstances of the time would have given him the power which he was able to exercise—would have of course set him at strife with those whose will to oppress, and whose ability to oppress, were greater than belonged to any contemporary society. But in his opposition to the French philosophy, in his ready acceptance of the modern English, he showed himself their disciple, not their foe. They had trained him for this. Their Aristotelian manuals, their

either by Jesuits or Jansenists.

Other reasons sufficient to explain the persecution.

An enemy of the Jesuits, but yet their disciple.

fragments of scholasticism, he would of course cast off with disdain; every one would see that they were worn out. The rags of divinity which clung to their dogmas of philosophy would have dropped off naturally, and without effort, before he came to England. But the thorough hatred they had conceived of all lessons that connected divine principles with the constitution of man—which assumed that there is a divine teacher of men, greater than all mortal doctors, who guides them into truth—this they could impart to their pupil. What was fierce *odium theologicum* in them became light-hearted scorn in him: it was the same plant transplanted to another soil and another climate. (4.) Englishmen suppose that divines have some special grounds of complaint against Voltaire for his treatment of the question about the possible materiality of the human soul. Those divines who believe that this question can be brought to fair experiment, like any other, may complain of him for treating it so superficially. Berkeley, who held that materialists were forcing upon us one of those very school abstractions and superstitions which they denounce; Butler, who maintained that it is a fond imagination resting not on facts, but opposing facts—that our thinking substance perishes when the different particles of which our frame is composed are dispersed; may very fairly arraign Voltaire for dismissing the subject as one which only dreamers and fanatics suppose is a subject for investigation. But divines who repudiate experiment on such questions, who wish them to be decided by mere authority, have no quarrel with Voltaire. He concedes to them all that they ask. He is, in fact, one of the most able and successful of their apologists. (5.) Englishmen sometimes assume that Voltaire himself, and the philosophers who worked with him, or under him, had a very clear purpose in the work which they were undertaking—a distinct foresight of the consequences to which it would lead. The concluding paragraphs of these letters—which are the most important of all—may modify this opinion, though they ought not wholly to overthrow it. Condorcet, whose authority on such a point must have great weight, speaks of Voltaire as devoting himself, after he returned from England, to the task of overthrowing superstition in all its forms; explains his resolution to become a rich man because he was convinced that in his days a philosopher could not act effectually upon society if he adhered to the old tradition of the tattered cloak or the tub; and reports a conversation with a lieutenant of police, who said one day to Voltaire, "*Quoi que vous ecriviez, vous ne viendrez pas à bout de détruire la religion chrétienne.*" "*C'est ce que nous verrons repondit il.*" These are no doubt indications of design. And therefore the language in this

What divines may object to Voltaire's treatment of the question about the soul.

Not those who refer all such controversies to mere authority.

Did Voltaire aim at any revolution in opinion or in society?

passage respecting the little power of philosophers to excite any disturbances in society, and their want of inclination to excite them, must be taken *cum grano;* they do not *quite* express the writer's mind; there *was* a hope beneath them that he might do as much at least as the Cordeliers had done with their disputes about hoods and scarfs. But, on the other hand, there is in this passage the indication of an undoubtedly sincere conviction that the nineteen-twentieths of the race for whose physical amelioration we have no doubt that Voltaire had many benevolent aspirations, never would or could attempt to exercise that faculty of thinking which had been denied them; never would or could shake the fabric of society, or interrupt the felicity of rich philosophers. Something might be done for a considerable fraction of the one-twentieth which preferred romances to any other kind of reading. They might be taught many things which the old romances had not taught them. And without their help it might be "seen" whether, if the Christian religion only meant—as it seemed only to mean—a very cumbrous machinery for enabling Cordeliers to dispute about hoods and scarfs, Jesuits to plot, courtiers to lie, mistresses to govern, the wit of Voltaire would not be found too strong for it. If it *was* more than this, that also in due time would be seen. Those who thought that it was more might fall back on the old form of language which the priests and philosophers equally believed in their hearts to be obsolete; they might wait "till God came out of His place to judge the earth." Then it would be "seen" whether priests had not been guilty of hiding and darkening truths in which the nineteen had an interest as well as the twentieth—truths which might have raised the nineteen from serfs or beasts into men; then it would be seen whether philosophers were not sent into the world mainly to test the power of these truths—mainly to ascertain *what* is needed to bind those human beings into one, whom the disputes about hoods and scarfs, the wars of the chiefs of sects and the chiefs of parties, have rent asunder.

He did not dream of acting upon the lower strata of French society.

The trial day for priests and philosophers.

54. Three years after Voltaire appeared in England, there came to our shores another Frenchman, somewhat his senior. He also had every claim to be welcomed in London circles, for he was introduced into them by Lord Chesterfield. He was the Baron de la Brede and de Montesquieu. He was the author of the *Lettres Persannes*—a book which had produced an unparalleled sensation in Paris, the piquancy of which had been increased at its first appearance by curiosity respecting a great unknown, had been further stimulated when he was discovered to be one of the presidents of one of the parliaments of the nation, and had been renewed in the previous year, when Cardinal Fleury

Montesquieu (1689-1754).

The *Lettres Persannes.*

made certain immoral and irreligious passages in the *Letters* an excuse for refusing Montesquieu as a candidate for the academy. The existence of such passages might not have prevented Montesquieu from obtaining the friendship of Lord Chesterfield; at all events, they had been cancelled; and he possessed any additional credit which the name of an academician could give him. There was something not altogether creditable in his mode of disclaiming his early offences; but that his disclaimer represented an actual change in his feelings, and was not a mere concession to the court, his latest and longest work incontestably proves. That work, published after his visit to England, bore as clear marks of the observations which he made during that visit as the *Lettres Philosophiques* of Voltaire bore of his intercourse with our distinguished men in the same time. The fate of the two works has been exceedingly different. Voltaire's, though altogether a *resumé* of English opinions, habits, and institutions, produced an immense impression upon Paris, has been comparatively little read, and not at all welcomed, in the country which is the subject of it. The *Esprit des Lois*, on the other hand, at least till of late years, has been an unpopular book in France; whereas in England it has been quoted, eulogized, some of its sentences made into texts and proverbs. Since a very small portion of it directly concerns our country its government or its manners, and since Montesquieu, though no friend of Voltaire, was, in some degree, connected with his school, was intimate with Helvetius, received his *éloge* from D'Alembert, we might be surprised both at the indifference which was shown to so eminently French a book amongst those who could appreciate it best—at its acceptance where Gallican thoughts and a Gallican style are wont to be suspected. A few words which are due to so celebrated a work on the science of politics in a sketch of moral and metaphysical inquiries may explain this paradox.

The expurgated edition.

Popularity of the *Esprit des Lois* in England greater than in France.

55. The President Montesquieu, a lawyer at once and a noble, felt something of that direction of mind towards physical studies which characterized his time. He soon found that he had no vocation of that kind. The study of men, not as they present themselves in the books of speculators, but in actual history, was to be his occupation. The contrast between what he read, so far as it set forth any ideal of excellence and what he saw around him, was sure to strike a lively, vigorous intellect, such as his was; the resemblance of what he saw to what he read, so far as he read of the effects of conquest, of the corruptions of courts, of the impostures of priests, would be sure to strike him as strongly. These results of a young man's comparison of the present with the past, of the near with the distant, might

Direction of Montesquieu's thoughts to history

How far it made him a philosopher.

well take such a form as the *Lettres Persannes* present to us, and might hold out a promise that he would treat institutions and traditions in the same spirit as Voltaire. And there was always so much left of this original disposition in him—he so little abandoned either his admirations or his dislikes—that D'Alembert might fairly claim him as one of his school, and might consider his deviations from its maxims as weaknesses to be pardoned. But historical studies were certain to carry one who was bound to the soil by hereditary attachments, whose temper was very genial and who had no quarrel with the world, in an altogether different dircetion from theirs. He would look upon changes as inevitable, not as desirable; he would grow every day to see more of a meaning in that which had first seemed to him merely contemptible; he would reconcile himself to many anomalies; he would rather care to investigate how they had arisen, and what might be the end of them, than to utter any vehement cry against them. His original profession was apt to be a pedantical one. Might not he escape from its pedantry and fulfil its intention if he inquired into the *spirit* of laws; if he observed how they were related to the manners, traditions, climates, faiths, of the different nations of the earth; if he observed what laws befitted different kinds of government; what temperament and education generally accompanied these laws; if he could point out what were the signs of decay and degeneracy in different societies; when a monarchy passed into a despotism, losing the principle of *honour*, which is its principle; when an aristocracy becomes a depraved oligarchy, because the *moderation* which is its principle has perished; when a republic becomes a mere ochlocracy, because the political *virtue*, or love of country as such, which must inform its members, has been exchanged for the lust of individual power; when the mixed government, which exists by the distinction and harmony of its executive and legislative functions, has been ruined by the corruption of the last being greater than that of the other?

His bias towards the past.

Conception of his book.

56. This last remark is *the* remark for which Montesquieu has been best remembered in England. It became the watchword when the younger Pitt and others after him exerted themselves for a reform in our House of Commons. But it would be a mistake to attribute Montesquieu's general success in England to such maxims—far less to those distinctions respecting honour, moderation, and virtue, which appear to most of us more fanciful than, perhaps, if we looked into Montesquieu's intention, we should find that they are. It was the suggestion to us of an historical method of dealing with political questions, which, to a people possessing a continuous history and impatient of theories

His influence in England; how accounted for.

and dogmas proved most acceptable. It associated itself with the experimental movement in other directions; with all the physical inquiries which started from facts and not from conceptions; with Locke's desire to examine the facts of the understanding, discarding all innate ideas. At the same time it offered a striking contrast to Locke's own application of his doctrine in his *Essay on Government*, inasmuch as *he* began, like his opponent Filmer, with a hypothesis. The Frenchman starts from society and social instincts, not like Locke from the conception of a contract, or Hobbes from the conception of a set of individuals tearing each other in pieces. He assumes different forms of government as belonging to different ages, countries, states of feeling—not one as the necessary standard to which all must be reduced. He sympathizes with the reverence for old republican institutions which Englishmen derive from their classical studies; does not affront the family feeling which has worked itself into their own institutions; recognizes the sentiment of loyalty to a person just as far as that sentiment was possible in a time when princes who could not speak the language of England were reigning over it. Here are reasons enough to account for our admiration of a book which is far too quick and sudden in its turns of thought for our slow northern intellects, much of which is based upon a slight induction from the history which the writer accepted, much of which has been overthrown by a more accurate investigation of history. If Montesquieu is hasty in some of his conclusions, that, we have said, is common to him with many physical investigators, who have nevertheless given the hint of invaluable courses of inquiry; if he has been confuted in some of his assumptious, has not later experience confirmed the wisdom of his general method, by showing how great have been the practical failures of those who have started from cosmopolitan theories, and have overlooked the tendencies and tempers of particular races?

Montesquieu does not start from a theory, like Locke

Englishmen had much to overcome in their liking for him.

57. It will be obvious that nearly all the attractions which this book may have possessed for a country tolerably well governed and orderly, which believed that it had got through its revolutionary stage, and both parties in which appealed to the records and traditions of former days—those who thought themselves patriots most—would be detractions from its merits in the eyes of men living under a monarchy that could not be distinguished from despotism by the high honour of the Regent of Orleans, or of Louis the Beloved—under an aristocracy that still retained its worst privileges, against which the literary and middle class groaned more as they became more powerful—when a republic might be an agreeable dream, but when it would be often more agreeable still to think how, under such a

Causes which hindered his influence in France.

government, there would not be those restraints which a priesthood, by its necessary alliance with a monarchy, seemed to impose. On this subject, Montesquieu, in the later phases of his life, felt himself more at issue with his friends of the philosophical school than on any other. "Cette religion," says M. Villemain, "que dans la vivacité de sa jeunesse et dans la politique legère de son premier ouvrage, Montesquieu avait trop peu respectée, pourtant dans *l'Esprit des Lois* il la celebre et la revère. *C'est que maintenant il veut construire l'edifice social et qu'il a besoin d'une colonne pour le soutenir.*" An evidently true statement, and a text that would deserve a long illustration. Whilst the philosophers had good reason to think that the religion which they saw around them was undermining the social edifice, was justifying the political corruption, and was adding to it a corruption of its own, Montesquieu, studying other times more than his own—and his own by the light of other times—found that a religion of some sort had been demanded in every state, and convinced himself that Christianity was the best religion for modern states. It was another aspect of the subject. Montesquieu was right to present it exactly as he did, because it corresponded to facts which he had discovered, and it faithfully expressed the convictions to which he had attained. Much good might come to Frenchmen, and to Englishmen also, if they thoroughly considered both statements—that of the philosophers and that of Montesquieu—and acknowledged each to be based on actual observations. But we cannot pretend that the last, without the first, would be as good or satisfactory as many Englishmen and many Frenchmen of a later reactionary time have considered it. We fear that it has led not a few to think of religion in a very artificial, insincere way—as a necessary *colonne* to the *edifice social;* the supporters of which *edifice social* may therefore make what use of it they can, and devise what contrivances to prop it they can, without much respect to its truthfulness or to their own. Montesquieu has conferred a great benefit upon mankind, and has helped to deliver us from many crude dogmas, both of divines and of infidels, by asserting that in every religion there has been something which the nation that professed it has demanded and could not dispense with. The more courageously that fact is proclaimed—the less Christians shrink from the proclamation of it—the more they will confess the one God of truth, the more they will prove that there must be a faith, not for particular nations but for mankind. But if this conviction is not joined with *these* maxims; that every lie has led, and must lead, to the destruction of nations as well as of individuals; that there is a tendency in all nations, and in all men, to mix their religious instincts with lies;

Montesquieu's thoughts on religion.

A column of the social edifice.

Montesquieu's conception of it honest, from his point of view.

Valuable with reference to the history of nations.

But capable of great abuse.

that if they have nothing else to depend upon than religious instincts, they will embrace a lie, and worship a lie; we think that the compliments to religion which have proceeded from the school of Montesquieu may be at least as injurious to social and personal morality as the scorn of it which has proceeded from the school of Voltaire. The thought would be painful, even overwhelming, if there were not two sides to it. We may learn from it that the highest Truth, which dwells not in man's conceptions about God, but in God Himself, may use both the scorn and the compliments for His service; that each may have done a work which the other could not do; that when each has destroyed the other (and since scorn and compliments are both in themselves false, that must be the right issue), those principles to which each has pointed, and which each has disguised, will live and flourish together.

The remedy for this abuse.

Vico (1668-1753).

His struggles.

His posthumous triumphs.

His domestic life.

58. Those who meditate most seriously upon these contradictions, and upon this possible reconciliation, will be best prepared to appreciate the labours of a man who was not a countryman of Voltaire and Montesquieu, whose circumstances were altogether unlike theirs, who was quite unhonoured, almost unknown, by the men who most honoured them, but who, perhaps, is exercising now, and may exercise hereafter, an influence as much greater than theirs as his genius was more profound. The Neapolitan, Jean Baptiste Vico, may be thought to confirm Voltaire's opinion that riches are very needful for one who would make his thoughts acceptable to his generation. He struggled all his life with poverty, and with indifference. He could obtain a scanty livelihood at times by writing verses. Now and then he was strongly tempted to abandon for such an occupation the search after a science of humanity, in which neither his own people nor foreigners appeared to take the slightest interest. It is since his death—comparatively in recent years—that he has been owned as the originator of lines of inquiry in which German and French philosophers have been content to travel; that modern ideologists have claimed him as their progenitor; that earnest Catholics have been equally zealous to assert their right in his speculations and his conclusions. His life is a touching and beautiful one. Married to a woman who seems to have been incapable of performing either the duties of a wife or of sympathizing with him, he was an exemplary husband and a devoted father, never allowing his studies to interfere with his care of his children—some of whom rewarded his care, some of whom requited it very ill—tender, and bitterly afflicted when the errors of one of them drove him to the exercise of an almost Roman authority. These facts should be recorded, not only that we may not

exalt our virtues above those of the inhabitant of an Italian city in a corrupt age, but because a sense of the sacredness of domestic life and of its connection with all political institutions, even with the principles of science, is characteristic of Vico more than of any philosopher of his own time, perhaps of any time. Like Montesquieu, he was early turned from the pursuit of physical laws into an inquiry respecting the laws which regulate human society. Like Montesquieu, he was disposed to pursue the subject historically; not to start from assumptions. But the question presented itself much more strongly to him than it did to Montesquieu—What *is* history? How far can I depend upon that which is given me as history? How can I distinguish fact from fable? Supposing I can make that distinction, what am I to do with that which I have treated as fable? Is that to go for nothing? Is it not meant to teach me anything?

Mythology.

59. In prosecuting this inquiry, Vico became struck with the immense significance of mythology. In it he thought he could detect indications of the principles of civil institutions. By means of it he might often discover how these institutions had been formed, with what they had had to fight, how they had affected the manners and morals of nations, and had been affected by them. But he could not be satisfied with these discoveries. There would be no foundation for them if there were not an eternal truth beneath all men's intuitions—if there were not a God whom man does not create out of his imagination, but who has created him. Here arises the need of a new science. Its ground is laid in the belief that God is related to mankind, and is the teacher of mankind; that He has imparted to men a common sense which recognizes Him and feels after Him. It proceeds, also, upon the belief that men have sought to make themselves independent of God. Vico discovers in all men (1.) The sense of a government or Providence over them; (2.) A sense of the need of some bond between the sexes, *i. e.*, of a law of marriage; (3.) A sense of reverence for the dead, and the duty of in some way disposing of the body; in which instinct is contained, he thinks, the recognition of immortality. How this common sense was gradually developed in the pagan world; how those "giants," who, as he gathers both from Scripture and heathen stories, were the asserters of an atheistic brutality, were gradually overthrown; how the belief in a Jupiter who subdued them expressed the confession of human dependence, the fact of *a* Ruler; how mere dread was at first the main element of this conception; how other feelings, modifying this fear, gradually linked themselves to his name; how that second human idea of the relation of the sexes and wed-

The new science.

The three human instincts.

The Jupiter of the heathen fables.

Vico the beginner of modern ideology.

The corrector of Ideologists.

lock brought in a Juno to share his bed, to mingle in his councils; how the family idea had unfolded itself in the different fables of the heathen divinities; how the third idea of immortality mingles also with all those fables; how these cannot be referred in anywise to mere philosophical or theological notions; how the poetical instinct or wisdom out of which they grew was, in fact, the expression of a general or national instinct, of which the poets were the utterers; how they brought to light metaphysical, moral, political, physical, geographical conceptions in the mind of their countrymen; how out of this primitive wisdom there grew the more formal philosophical or political wisdom; how civil institutions, how forms of language, are explained by this process, and receive light from it;—all this is treated by Vico at any rate with consummate ingenuity—an ingenuity, of course, mixed with much that is fantastic and uncritical, but yet indicating a mode of distinguishing the fantastic from the real, and suggesting a most subtle criticism. He has carried this so far as to be the originator of the German notion, afterwards expanded by Wolff, of a mythical Homer. If that notion has again in our time been discredited, and there is a tendency to return to the older and more agreeable belief, Vico has at least done no harm to Homer's reputation—has probably been one of the great instruments of awakening a more earnest study of him. The same remark may be made respecting suggestions which he has thrown out as to the mythical character of early legislators and reformers, such as Zoroaster; in all of which he has anticipated much modern criticism, and may also have given hints for the correction of it. In one respect he certainly cannot be accused of favouring the ideology of which he has been the parent. It is essential to his science that the true God should *not* be confounded with the gods whom men have imagined. It is essential that the God who has educated men to seek after Him should have made himself known, not according to their conceptions of Him, but according to His true nature. The revelation to the Jews is acknowledged not as an exception to the principle but as part of it—as indispensable to the part of it which respects pagan mythology. If modern wisdom has sought to reduce that revelation under mythological conditions, it can only do so by overthrowing not by unfolding Vico's science. He may have given excuses for that procedure, both by the rashness of some of his doubts respecting profane literature and by his fancies respecting the records of Scripture; but, upon the whole, he has done more than most writers to substitute the acknowledgment of moral and political principles, actually revealed by God, and actually perceivable by man, for the cold notion of a useful religion, to which French and English Conservatives have shown themselves so prone; he has done more than any man to show that mere conceptions of a divine nature cannot be the root of a belief in it; that something must *be* in order that anything may be dreamed of in reference to it.

Vico equally opposed to Locke and Descartes.

60. Of all the writers to whom we have yet alluded, Vico is the one who derived least from Locke. Apparently Locke was to him merely a follower of Epicurus; one who recognized no guide but sense. But we are not to assume that he accepted Descartes because he rejected Locke. He stood equally aloof from both. The common sense or instincts of which he spoke must not be confounded with the innate notions which the French philosopher supposed to dwell in every man. Vico had the greatest dread of confusing the deep convictions which, as he thought, held men together, which were the bonds of nations, the signs of a humanity, with any formal conclusions or propositions which reasoning men had deduced from them. He was jealous of most philosophers, because he saw in them a perpetual inclination to take this course. Even if he had not suspected the atomic theory of Descartes as a return to Democritic materialism—even if he had not considered his demonstration of God an unnatural graft of Platonism upon this atheistical basis—he would have rejected as eagerly as Voltaire, though on a different ground, the notion that each individual brings with him into the world a vast amount of knowledge which he forgets as soon as he wants it. Since Vico was not writing for the salons, he might not have indulged in that monstrous parody of a great man's belief; but he shrunk from any the faintest approximation to an opinion which would test the *common* sense, that which marks out men as social beings created for fellowship, by the indications of it in any creature in whom the social feeling is either undeveloped or has become nearly extinguished. So that Locke's argument from the apparent absence of any belief in God in certain tribes, would not affect in the slightest degree his recognition of a divine Providence as one of the key notes of humanity. He admits the possibility of its extinction, or of its all but extinction; he would make the condition of men which accompanies that extinction the strongest witness of his doctrine.

Reasons of his dissent from the latter.

His social instinct.

What philosophers he reverenced.

61. Though Vico was not an admirer of philosophers generally, there were a few names which were very dear to him, a few men whom he reckoned his heroes. Plato, we may easily conjecture, was one of them. From him, more than any one, he had learnt to connect the social feelings with the divine; to

recognize the principles of polity as eternal; and to trace the growth of it to the awakening of one necessity after another in human creatures. The ideal, with Vico, never excluded the actual; if he reverenced Plato, he reverenced Tacitus also, as a faithful observer of men, as one who looked through appearances to the truth beneath them. For the same reason he accepted Bacon as the true guide to the method of investigating human as well as natural facts, discovering in him more likeness to Plato than he would have cared to confess. Hugo Grotius had also been of vast use to Vico in suggesting to him the idea of a law of nations, a common principle to bind men together, even if he had been somewhat formal in his mode of developing that idea. For this common law was that of which our Italian was in search. His method of pursuing it has made him of immense use to later times. But he had to make great sacrifices, and not only sacrifices of immediate interest and reputation, that he might engage in the pursuit. Tacitus, it will be observed, is the only one of his heroes whom he could in any sense claim as a countryman; and he wrote in another tongue. Every word of his that he read must have reminded Vico of the different world in which they were living. His alliance to modern Italy was through insignificant poems. When he *thought* he went back to the classical times. This was a tremendons loss to the man, diminished, but not removed, by his domestic virtues and sufferings. It takes away the substance from much of his speculation. His idealism, in spite of himself, always threatens to become fantasy. We should like to hear the voice of the Neapolitan citizen rising above that of the cosmopolite. Alas! such a voice could not be heard. That Vico's is so strong and clear amidst all the disadvantages of his position; that he could be what he was without a country; that he could even claim for Italy something of its old right to speak as a witness for all the nations, not for herself specially; should increase the admiration with which we regard him. But we may partly understand why Montesquieu, who, amidst all his general studies, was essentially the nobleman of the South of France—why Voltaire, who, with all his cosmopolitism, was the oracle of Paris and the model of its writers, should have necessarily obtained an influence in their day which could not be reached by a more elevated and profound thinker, who only appealed to Europe generally, who spoke of the demands of mankind, without being attached to any definite circle of men.

Plato, Tacitus, Bacon, Grotius.

Vico an alien in modern Italy.

How his philosophy suffered from his position.

German philosophy.

62. A German ought hardly to admit this plea in behalf of another great thinker of this time, who died long before Vico, who is rather the immediate contemporary of Locke than his

successor. Leibnitz can scarcely be said to have a country more than Vico. At all events, a philosophical writer who rejects the use of a language which was soon to claim for itself the dignity of being the specially philosophical language, can scarcely have possessed much patriotism, must have preferred almost any title to that of a patriot. Though Leibnitz was willing to devote himself to researches respecting comparatively insignificant portions of German history—though he would give up much time and incredible industry to the records of some of its princely families—he seems to have entered upon these tasks in the spirit of a general antiquarian, or of a man to whom no sort of knowledge could come amiss. He preferred French, no doubt, because he looked upon it as most answering to the character of a European tongue, as entitled to divide with Latin the dignity of being the language for men of letters, and as possessing some advantages over Latin in that it was also fit for conversation and for affairs. We must think that this deliberate preference of that which did not properly belong to him was rightly punished by an immense diminution of moral influence; so that men with a thousandth part of his reading, and with immeasurably less of philosophical sagacity, had an effect upon the mind of their own age, and even of subsequent ages, which was not granted to him. Nor can we believe that his wilfulness was not seriously injurious to himself as well as to his readers. With tastes which from his childhood were encyclopædic equally inclined to engage in historical, juridical, mathematical, philological, metaphysical, theological studies; at home in the old philosophers, the fathers, the schoolmen, all modern doctors; now occupied with the differential calculus, now with settling the ceremonies to be observed by German princes towards each other; sometimes compiling a dry *codex diplomaticus*, sometimes reconciling Aristotle with Descartes, sometimes clearing up religious doubts for princes; he surely needed more than any man the sacredness of a mother tongue to give him something like the sense of a home and a centre. Locke shrunk from no subjects which came in his way. But he occupied himself with the principles of education because boys were committed to him. He wrote on government because England was passing through a Revolution. He attended to the currency because the Chancellor of the Exchequer needed his help to be honest. Leibnitz exercised the dangerous privilege of lighting upon all flowers whatsoever from which there was a chance of extracting honey, without knowing exactly to what swarm he belonged, to what queen he owed fealty, in what hive his treasures were to be stored.

An indifferent German.

His encyclopædic tastes.

Contrast of Locke and Leibnitz.

63. But they *are* treasures which, if neither Germans nor Frenchmen can distinctly claim them as their own, all of us

Leibnitz a critic upon all contem-

porary philosophers.

may possess in common. In some respects the circumstances that were unfavourable to the cohesion of the innumerable particles whereof the knowledge of Leibnitz was composed, and therefore to their force upon the minds of other men, are profitable to those who are tracing the history of thought. For he threw his speculations so much into the form of criticisms upon current opinions and prevailing philosophies, that we can detect more easily what his relations were to those about him and what he was contributing to the elucidation of the questions which they had raised. If we understand how he felt about the *Essay on the Human Understanding*, we shall know best whereabouts he stood with reference to the English as well as the French philosophy of the eighteenth century, and what he was doing to prepare the way for the German philosophers who were to follow him. And for this purpose we have excellent materials, since he wrote dialogues—of little worth merely as dialogues—one of the parties in which is a Lockian, and announces the Lockian conclusions one after another in the order in which they appear in the essay, and the other is Leibnitz himself. These dialogues contain, in fact, one of the most elaborate, and, on the whole, one of the fairest reviews ever written by one eminent man of the work of another. They were intended for Locke's own perusal. He died before they were finished, and, on that account, were published by their author with some reluctance, though there is not a sentence in them which could have given pain to the subject of them while he lived, or which is not full of grateful respect to his memory.

Leibnitz on Locke.

64. The preface to these dialogues throws much light upon the character and objects of Leibnitz. One perceives clearly that he has a system of his own, to which he attaches great worth; that he believes it is capable of reconciling the difficulties and contradictions in most of the philosophies which he has studied. He detects in it even greater capacities than these. He supposes it may remove the hostilities of theologians to one another—the objections of sceptics to the Christian faith—the main difficulties about the government of God in the world. Perhaps it is always a cause of thankfulness when a man with this amiable, yet terrible, confidence in his own discoveries is hindered from setting them forth as formally and continuously as he would like to do; when his very eagerness to produce them and to make them bear upon the notions of other thinkers compels him to present them to us detached and out of the bands of system, so that they really become helps to us in the course of our own inquiries, not heavy chains binding us to a master. Leibnitz in the thirteenth century might have been an "angelic" or "irrefragable" doctor, settling

Extravagant faith of Leibnitz in his powers of reconciliation.

all controversies, arranging all subjects in their proper divisions. In the eighteenth century he appears only to throw out useful and pregnant suggestions which may effect much less than he thought they would effect, and yet also much more. For a man who puts obstacles in the way of the establishment of a new kind of dogmatism, very different from that of the schools, but in its own way quite as tyrannical, quite as likely to hinder the free progress of the human intellect in various directions, mingling far more directly with all the business of life, is, in truth, a great benefactor to his own age and to all subsequent ages; and this because he entirely fails of his more ambitious aims; because his system of the universe is doomed to the fate of those that have preceded it, and of those that are to follow it.

Real worth of his lessons.

Ideas distinct from thoughts.

65. The first book of the *Nouveaux Essais* develops what seems to us the very important principle that the existence of truths in the mind is not the least disproved by the non-existence of thoughts about those truths. The usual objections to this doctrine are carefully brought forward and weighed. The fact that all processes of thought begin with the senses is taken for granted. The apparent contradiction of the mind having that which it is not aware of is shown not to be a contradiction at all, and not to need thé Platonic doctrine of reminiscence for the removal of it. The argument that children, or savages, or idiots, ought to be wiser than other people, because they have fewer impediments of sense or outward knowledge, is treated with at least as much gravity as it deserves. Then, as to practical principles, the obligations of morality are shown by a process quite different from Butler's, but leading to the same result, to be implied in all the actions of men, not least in the acts which contradict them. The difficulties and imperfections of the argument from universal consent are frankly admitted, and are shown to prove nothing against the existence of truths in man and for man, but only against the recognition or *apperception* of these truths by men. In like manner, all the facts which Locke has gleaned from travellers respecting the atheism of certain nations, are admitted and strengthened by the wider ethnological knowledge of Leibnitz; but they are shown to be answered by admissions of Locke himself that there is a witness which the works of creation bear to men respecting some being whom they must fear and reverence. And the non-recognition of that witness is sufficiently explained, Leibnitz thinks, by that not liking to retain God in their knowledge which the Apostle speaks of as the punishment of corrupt practices. Finally, he gladly confesses that Locke has done good service in teaching men not to glorify their prejudices

Objections answered.

Concessions to Locke which strengthen the argument.

under the name of innate ideas. He believes that there is great need of that warning. But the effort to avert this danger, and to arrive at truths which are distinct from our prejudices, and contrary to them, is far better promoted, he thinks, when we admit the truths to be with us—since then an obligation is laid on us by our very nature to seek after them—than if we suppose all knowledge to have its ultimate ground in the impressions upon our senses.

Nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu, nisi intellectus ipse.

66. These conclusions involve that famous principle which we are wont perhaps more than any other to associate with the name of Leibnitz—a principle which he opposed to Aristotle as much as to Locke,—"There is nothing in the understanding which is not first in the senses, *except the understanding itself.*" That memorable exception is involved, as Leibnitz appears to think, and as Hartley, viewing the subject from the other side, thought also, in Locke's own admission of Reflection as an element in the mind additional to Sensation. Each writer insists, in the interest of his own doctrine, that Locke, to be logical and consistent with himself, must either abandon his Reflection, making it a mere creature of sensation, or treat it as the very faculty of the understanding itself. And if this last course is taken, there seems no escape from the position of Leibnitz, that the understanding must have some ground to rest upon, and that to know what that ground is may be more needful for it than to know all the things without upon which it is exercised. The question, how far Leibnitz proceeded in this investigation, may give rise to many diversities of opinion. If he suggested it to an age which was moving in the other direction, and made it clear that some time or other it must be pursued vigorously, he did, perhaps, as much as could be demanded of one man; he ventured as near that perilous ocean of Being as any one might safely do after it had once been pronounced unnavigable. The next book of the Dialogues is not as interesting to us as the first. In it he enters upon that question which we have found Voltaire disposing of so summarily rather more than twenty years afterwards—Whether the mind thinks always? Voltaire was, of course, aware of what Leibnitz had written; but he did not feel himself obliged to take notice of it. Nor, perhaps, was it a duty in him to do so; for Leibnitz says nothing that could be interesting or intelligible to those for whom Voltaire principally wrote, though something, perhaps, which deserves the attention both of psychologists and physiologists. He investigates many phenomena of our sleeping and waking states, and protests against the attempt to separate the mind from the body, as if their union were not a fact, and as if the conditions of both must not be affected by that fact; he

Locke's Reflection.

Whether the mind thinks always.

The mind and body not to be disjoined.

struggles against the determination of the Cartesians to make everything mechanical except the soul; admits, with Locke, that we have no thoughts without sensations; but contends that we are never without sensations; and confirms the doctrine of his first book, that ideas are not identical with thoughts more than they are with sensations. He makes a skilful use of this distinction. The Lockian asks him whether he admits the idea to be the object of the thought according to the statement of his master? "I do," is the answer, "provided you mean the *immediate internal object, and that this object is the expression of the value or quality of the thing. If the idea were the* FORM *of the thoughts, it would be born and would die with the actual thoughts which answer to it; but being the* OBJECT *of them, it may be both anterior and posterior to the thoughts.*" "Internal objects," "the idea not a form of the thought," is a phraseology which the reader must compare with that of a later school.

Ideas, in what sense objects of the mind.

Insensible perceptions.

67. Closely connected with this doctrine is one which is specially and characteristically Leibnitzian, concerning the multitude of *insensible perceptions* which dwell in every man, which "form our tastes, those images of the qualities of the senses, clear in their union, confused in their parts; those impressions which the bodies that surround us make upon us, and which envelop the infinite; that *liaison* which every being has with the rest of the universe." We must add the rest of his eloquent description. "It may even be said that in virtue of those minute perceptions the present is full of the future and charged with the past; that all things work together (σύμπνοια πάντα, as Hippocrates was wont to express it); and that in the smallest substance eyes piercing like the eyes of God might read the whole series of events in the universe; *quæ sint quæ fuerint quæ mox ventura trahantur.* These insensible perceptions further designate and constitute the individual man, who is characterized by the traces which they preserve of his previous states, by the connection which they establish between those states and his present state. They may be known by a superior being, even though the individual in whom they dwell should not be aware of them; that is to say, if there should be in him no distinct recollection of them. They even give us the means of recovering the memory, when we need it, by periodical developments which may come to us some day. It is for this reason that death can only be a sleep, and cannot be a lasting sleep; the perceptions only ceasing to be clearly distinguished, and being reduced in living creatures into a state of confusion, which suspends the *apperception,* but which cannot continue for ever." The passage in the preface to the Dialogue which

What their presence effects.

The links between the past and the future.

Connection of Mathematics with Metaphysics in the mind of Leibnitz.

contains this grand dream—if it is nothing more, and many of us will feel that it must be more—will no doubt remind mathematicians of that doctrine of infinitesimals which it was given to Leibnitz to elaborate, and which brought him into such painful and ignominious disputes with our Newton. It is pleasant to think that the different studies of Leibnitz did not stand apart as mere branches of knowledge. He could not catch a glimpse of light on one side of the heavens without perceiving a reflection of it on the opposite side. This sense of a unity in all his pursuits may have been a counteraction to his dangerous diffusiveness, though it may have fostered his passion for system. A better remedy for the disease which made him ambitious to embrace the universe, was his reverence for the little—the unobserved. It may have been the saving of his mind that his grandest theory compelled him to search for the mysteries which are contained in grains of sand.

The Infinite the ground of the finite; not the finite of the Infinite.

68. The Dialogue which we deserted for the sake of illustrating its leading purpose, corresponds as exactly to the second book of Locke as the former did to the first, and embraces, therefore, a number of discussions on the most vexed topics—Time and Space, Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain. All these we must commend to the reader; especially the assertion of Leibnitz in the seventeenth chapter, in which so much is involved, "that the true *Infinite* is not a modification; it is the *Absolute;* on the contrary, so soon as we introduce modifications, we limit ourselves, or form a *finite.*" There is a pregnant remark also which deserves the most serious meditation on the mode of arriving at the infinite by *intension* instead of *extension.* These, and a multitude of hints which lie scattered through this criticism are of universal interest. But they have a special connection with the philosophy which had been developed in our island; for many reasons they address themselves particularly to us. In truth, Leibnitz had close relations to our land besides those which arose out of his conflicts with Newton, or his suspicions of Locke. His feelings for the House of Brunswick gave him almost his only point of sympathy with European life and politics. For the comfort and instruction of that Princess Sophia who was only not Queen of England, he composed his *Theodicée.* By her doubts, and her satisfaction with his solutions of them, he tested in some measure the soundness of his thoughts and the influence they were likely to produce on womankind and mankind. We shall find that he did not forget us after he had mourned her death; that his latest labours were devoted to the Hanoverian family, and for their sake to the island which it had been called to govern.

Relations of Leibnitz with the House of Brunswick.

The *Theodicée.*

Value of the *Theodicée.*

69. The *Theodicée* was regarded by Leibnitz himself as his great work—probably the one which he had lived to produce. We must extend to it the remark which we made respecting the *New Essays on the Human Understanding.* It seems to us a valuable drag upon the wheels of a philosophy which was travelling triumphantly through Europe. It throws out suggestions which those may turn to good account in whose minds another philosophy has superseded Locke's philosophy—one even more suspected by theologians than his was. So far as the book aspires to be self-sufficing, so far as it contains the elements of a system, we can only look upon it as possessing a biographical interest, because it was dear to Leibnitz himself; an historical interest, because it illustrates some of the tendencies of the nation to which Leibnitz really belonged, however he may have despised its language. The treatise *On the Conformity of Faith with Reason,* which is the first part of the *Theodicée,* and which explains the writer's purpose in the whole of it, is suggested by a passage, or rather by a number of passages, in Bayle's *Dictionary.* Leibnitz was a great admirer of that work. The erudition of it resembled his own. Moreover, Bayle had treated the philosopher individually with very high respect. He had confessed that some of his explanations of difficulties were striking, and worthy of all consideration. But the scepticism of Bayle was very profound. It assumed a form which misled many persons in that day, and would perhaps mislead even more in ours, if we had not become habituated to the ironical method, and had not an inclination to suspect irony where it does not exist. Bayle did not the least deny the doctrines which were ordinarily received by Christians. He assumed them to be all true, however repulsive the statement of them might be, however contradictory the judgments of different doctors about them. All he maintained was that it was utterly ridiculous to apply any principles of reason to these doctrines. Reason had nothing to do with them; they must be assumed simply as matters of faith. Many divines had suggested that the more mysteries shocked the reason or the conscience, the more merit there was in accepting them. With Bayle's intimate knowledge both of Protestant and Romish theology, of those who had pleaded for predestinarianism and of those who had pleaded for transubstantiation, he could produce abundant authorities in support of this view of things; he could show that he was maintaining the cause of orthodoxy and was exposing the folly of those who pretended to modify it, or to place the arguments for it on any feeble human ground. It should be understood always that this was the shape which the scepticism of that age took when it appeared in a learned man like Bayle, and the shape which was

The conformity of faith and reason.

Form of Bayle's scepticism.

afterwards adapted to popular use, and divested of all its inconvenient trammels by Voltaire and the philosophes. It is this, then, which Leibnitz deals with. The discourse, it seems to us, is admirable, if theologians will look at it as addressed to themselves, rather than to Bayle or to the followers of Bayle. It shows them that the divines upon whose authority they are most wont to rest when they are pleading for the mysteries of the Gospel (Athanasius and Augustine for example), have dwelt continually on the unreasonableness of the opinions they were confuting, have maintained the Christian mysteries as being reasonable in the highest sense. It considers fairly the exceptions to this rule; those denunciations of philosophers for instance, by Luther, which we have so often had occasion to speak of in these pages. It shows how certainly theologians must come at last to unbelief, to the most hopeless kind of unbelief, if they are content to accept the distinction which the author of the *Dictionary* presents them with. But if we look at the discourse from the other side, as furnishing *itself* the triumphant reconciliation of the principles of faith with the principles of reason, we are constrained to pause. A vision of the century of doubts and questionings which lay before men who had received Leibnitz's satisfactory explanations, unfolds itself to us. We begin to question whether all that Athanasius, or Augustine, or Luther meant by the mysteries of faith—not when they were arguing, but when they were perceiving that which they needed for themselves and for mankind—was really comprehended in the Christianity which Leibnitz undertook to adjust with the demands of the reason; whether, on the other hand, he and the Princess Sophia were quite aware what those demands were, what in the course of the coming years they would prove themselves to be. What we have to thank Leibnitz for, then, is, for asserting bravely and vigorously, against all discontented sceptics and all self-satisfied theologians, that such a union there must be, and that men are intended to discover it, and that each man does really confess it when he seems most to set it at nought; that sceptics have a faith which is sometimes expressed in their very discontent; that divines are often very proud and contemptuous reasoners against reason. We may accept these as positive results from his argument, and therefore we may wait for the further light which history, and something better than history, is to throw upon our path, rather than submit either our faith or our reason to his theories.

To whom the treatise of Leibnitz may do real service.

Appeal to the Fathers.

Did Leibnitz reconcile faith and reason?

His services to truth at all events unquestionable.

The remainder of the treatise.

70. The other parts of the work consist of a series of essays on the "Goodness of God," the "Liberty of Man," and on the "Origin of Evil." To show how complete the argument was, and how entire his own satisfaction with it, Leibnitz added to

these essays "An Abridgment of the Controversy," along "with some Comments upon Hobbes and on King's *Origin of Evil*," as well as a treatise which he entitled "The cause of God, pleaded by his Justice, reconciled with his other Perfections and all his Acts." The names of these treatises bear witness to the earnestness and sincerity of the author; they bear witness also, we think, to his audacity. He has an undoubted conviction that there is a righteousness and goodness which rise above all anomalies, in which man may rest in the midst of all anomalies, which must at last triumph over all. He associates this belief with a personal Being, an object of habitual trust and love. What can be better? But would he not have been wiser to stop there? Were his apologies for this righteous and good Being likely to be as satisfactory as that trust and love, or as the nature that called them forth? One cannot complain of any man for having an affection for such a phrase as *pre-established harmony*, which was the darling phrase of Leibnitz. No doubt it brought infinite truths to his mind, and a profound comfort. There was an order beneath all things, an order which did not interfere with human freedom, but involved it, and which must at last be manifested in some great preponderance of good; however that is to be brought to pass, and whatever it consists in. Not to reverence a thought which must have made all the heavens and the earth look brighter to Leibnitz when he rose in the morning, and when he lay down to sleep; not to reverence even the words that embodied it, is impossible. But was not the thought, or even the phrase, better than any elaborate explanation of the way in which the co-existence of evil and good was bearable? Might there not be some danger, amidst those explanations, of the evil itself becoming a little too bearable, not quite enough hateful? Might not the "pre-established harmony" become more wonderful, more profound, than the personal Being who is the author of it? Could *that* be ever the object of trust or of love?

The pre-established harmony.

Attempts to show why good and evil co-exist.

Leibnitz and Descartes.

71. Though Leibnitz aspired to be a reconciler of the most opposing systems—though he did not despair of bringing Romanists and Protestants into concord—it is always by contrast with some other prevalent doctrine that he makes his own intelligible. His most famous maxim was called forth by Locke's glorification of the senses. His harmony is the counteraction of Bayle's divarication of faith and reason. And the atoms of Descartes—the earliest, and perhaps, on the whole, the most powerful of his guides—were encountered by his *Monads*. The more Descartes exalted the human soul, the more we have seen he disparaged everything but the soul. The animals were degraded into mere pieces of mechanism; the reverence for the

Disparagement of everything but the soul by Descartes.

human led to positive inhumanity in the treatment of all lower creatures. Against this tendency Leibnitz revolted; he was not the least willing to enthrone what was called the thinking substance, however much respect might be due to it, upon the ruin of the rest of creation. Everywhere he discovered life. But a general diffusive life, such as Spinoza sought through the universe, such as he supposed to flow forth from God, had no charm for a man brought up in Protestantism, accustomed more than Descartes or Malebranche to look upon each human soul as distinct and individual. He agreed, however, with Spinoza in one particular wherein he dissented from Descartes. Leibnitz could admit no mind except the infinite mind to be separated from some body, from something which he would call material. The universe appeared to him, not as it appeared to Descartes, made up of thinking substances, *plus* a congeries of particles which are the subjects for dissection. It consisted of vital, active, generative elements, out of which all the innumerable forms of existence are developed; souls being only the most perfect of those elements; possessing in addition to the other properties of life, self-consciousness; capable of conversing with that Monad to whom all others owe their existence—Him in whom all perfections must be combined, from whom they must be derived. In consistency with this doctrine, Leibnitz could see no ground for denying immortality to animals; the immortality must be a continuance of the kind of life with which each creature is endowed. The immortality of a self-conscious Monad must therefore be essentially different from that of one who wants self-consciousness. An entirely different economy must be needful for the government and education of one and the other. There must be a city of God or kingdom of grace for minds or spirits, and a natural kingdom for the other monads. But the principles of the two must strictly agree, and the universe altogether must be the best that could have been formed; all its seeming discords must really minister to its perfection. Death can never master it, or become the dominant principle in it. This optimism of Leibnitz has somewhat overshadowed his other principles, because it has had more attraction for some minds, and afforded a more ready handle for ridicule to others. But it should never be separated, either for sympathy or scorn, from his monads. For the idea of optimism in a universe consisting of monads must be strangely different from the idea of optimism in a universe such as Spinoza believed in. Each thing must have its own perfection; there can be no blending of natures, no absorption of all natures into one. So far as Leibnitz was preserved by his monads from this Pantheism—so far as his sense of each man's responsibility, of each thing having a meaning and end, was

Opposition of Leibnitz to Spinoza.

Point of agreement between them.

The monads.

Animal immortality.

The kingdom of grace and of nature.

The optimism of Leibnitz not to be disjoined from his monads.

Leibnitz avoids Pantheism, but sacrifices unity in pursuit of distinctness.

Vico and Leibnitz as philosophers.

Their outward conditions.

awakened and kept alive by them—so far they carry a witness of their truth, however that truth may be affected, and its external shape and statement transformed by its union with other truths which he did not equally perceive, but which he supposed must be included in his system. No doubt he had provided for the unity and cohesion of these distinct existencies; the pre-established harmony settled all that. But we suspect that poor Vico had a perception of a real order, divine, human, natural—because of the fellowship between different natures—to which Leibnitz, dwelling among these separate elements, never attained. Nor can we, in comparing the two men, forget how much their different positions contributed to this result. That of the Italian would appear far more unpropitious to all philosophical meditations, for he was sickly from his youth up, and had a hard fight to obtain bread, not only for himself but for an uncongenial wife and for children not always grateful for his toil. Leibnitz had a marvellous bodily constitution, capable of all literary fatigue, and also of enjoyment. He was never in distress; he left so much money behind him that his inheritrix is said to have died for joy at the discovery of her treasure. Of his private history we have this record in the Eloge of Fontenelle :—"*M. Leibnitz ne s' était point marié; il y avait pensé à l'âge de cinquante ans, mais la personne qu'il avait en vue voulait avoir temps de faire ses reflexions, cela donna à M. Leibnitz le loisir de faire les siennes et il ne se maria point.*" No doubt these two independent, comfortable, self-conscious monads, were led by a mature deliberation upon the fitness of things to a very reasonable conclusion. No doubt Leibnitz, even at fifty, still more if he had embarrassed himself at an earlier time with domestic cares, might have been obliged to contract in some degree the range of his studies, might perhaps have lost a little of his optimism. But would he not have learned something by the necessary daily collision with other natures in vulgar affairs, and by the inevitable battle with his own, which he did not and could not learn whilst he was merely discussing Locke, or Bayle, or Descartes, or even while he was trying to clear away doubts from the minds of Princesses?

Letters between Leibnitz and Clarke.

72. A series of letters to and from Dr. Clarke winds up the enormous correspondence of Leibnitz. So that there is a curious meeting-point between him and Butler. The philosophical life of the one begins where that of the other terminates. It was solicitude for the family over which Leibnitz was especially appointed to watch that provoked this controversy. He had been in great fear lest Caroline, the Princess of Wales, should suffer from the infidelity of England. The parent of German philosophy gives her warning that she has gone into

a country the religion of which is greatly weakened by the physical theories of Newton and the metaphysical theories of Locke. Clarke comes forward in defence of the first; about the fame of the latter he seems indifferent. In the first two letters the subject of the duel is mainly the attempt of Clarke to support all moral and divine truths by mathematical evidence. So long as that is done, the natural religion of England must, in his opinion, be safe. We have heard of the grounds upon which Butler dissented from this opinion—those which led him to strike into a method so very different from that of Clarke. It is strange to read for what entirely opposite reasons the German philosopher complains of the great demonstrator. He demands a metaphysic which is above these mathematics. "They cannot contain," he says, "*a sufficient reason*" for the existence and order of things. This "*sufficient reason*" (another of those favourite terms of Leibnitz, for which he had an almost childish fondness, but which did unquestionably represent to him a sacred truth) must be found, seeing that it is implied in all demonstrations, and that without it they establish nothing. Thus, while the Englishman betakes himself to the study of facts, and can find no real satisfaction in any demonstrations, however seemingly conclusive, which do not account for facts, Leibnitz must have some premises which are anterior to demonstrations. It is of those that he is in search. Whilst Butler is always protesting against the imagining of possible worlds, as if it were an insult to the Divine Creator, Leibnitz, out of jealousy for the honour of the Creator, must discover what is the best possible world, that he may acquiesce in the one of which he is an inhabitant.

Leibnitz and Butler, their opposite objections to Clarke.

These indications of an opposite temper of mind—of a different conception of the objects of philosophy—come out most strikingly in these letters, and suggest many reflections by which the student of the after-relations of English and German inquiries may be greatly profited. Most of the questions which have occupied the defenders of the two methods since,—the relation and limits of the natural and the supernatural—the meaning of miracles—the reality or unreality of space and time, present themselves to us here in their germ. With whichever of the learned combatants the English reader may be disposed to sympathize, he will hardly be able to say that the purposes and views of Leibnitz are less devout or less Christian than those of Clarke. What conclusion, for instance, must impress itself upon the mind of a student who considers this passage of our champion? Leibnitz had said that "space, as an absolute reality, was the idol of certain modern Englishmen." Clarke says, in his fourth letter, "Space is immense, immovable, and eternal, and the same thing may be said of

They represent opposite natures and habits of mind.

Connection of the letters with later philosophical history.

Space and Duration.

duration. But it does not follow from that that there is any thing eternal outside of God; for space and duration are *not* outside of God. They are immediate and necessary results of His existence, without which He would not be eternal and present everywhere." Might not a believer in the Nicene Creed, in a sense in which Clarke did not believe it, exclaim, "So, then, there is no difficulty to a mathematical theologian of the eighteenth century in admitting a co-eternal sharer of the throne of the Almighty Father—only space, not the Son, claims that glory?" The consequence would not be true if applied to Clarke himself. He meant something far better than this. But it would be true of him as an argumentative doctor. And if he tried to shelter himself, as of course he would, under the plea that space was with him an attribute and not a being, might he not have been told that this was one of the very scholastic refinements from which he, the naturalist and the mathematician, was anxious to set his country free? We are not anxious to press the point in anywise against Clarke. It might, in its recoil, strike Leibnitz, whose monadic tendencies may have placed him, on this subject, at no very great distance from his opponent. His weakness, as a defender of Christianity, seems to us to be always this, that, like most men of his time, he speaks of "the *founder of our religion*," of his benevolent lessons respecting God, of his reasonable doctrine respecting the Divinity, and does not make us feel in what wise he made God manifest to man.' Till that was done, we fancy that neither Clarke nor Leibnitz could effect much for the removal of English infidelity, either by mathematical or metaphysical evidence, or by any influence which either of them might possess over the Princess of Wales. But we refer to Clarke's dogmas about space and duration that we may lead those who call themselves orthodox Englishmen seriously to reflect whether these notions did not, for every reason, theological as well as philosophical, demand a severer investigation than they had received in the days of Leibnitz and of Clarke; and whether, if the result of that examination, even though conducted by the countrymen of Leibnitz, should be to confirm the doubts of Leibnitz respecting their reality, to an extent of which he scarcely dreamed—the effect would necessarily be injurious to sound theology, might not remove one of the greatest obstructions to the reception of a sound theology?

What Clarke thought of them.

Wherein Leibnitz and Clarke resembled each other.

How his belief in the outward reality of space and time affected Clarke's theology.

Christian Wolff (1679-1754).

73. No result of this kind, nothing that could shake the empire of space or time, or of any other abstract entity, was likely to proceed from the man who presents himself next in the history of German philosophy. Yet Christian Wolff is not an unimportant figure, and to omit him would be to make the passage between Leibnitz and the teachers who were to effect the great

metaphysical revolution of the eighteenth century quite unintelligible. He, in fact, is in one sense the beginner of the German school. He did not discard the use of his native tongue. He claimed it as perfectly available for all philosophical purposes. We would lay an emphasis on the word *all*, for it was unquestionably Wolff's ambition to leave out no subject from his course of teaching, and to leave nothing unsaid that could be said about the different subjects which entered into it. So he believed he was fulfilling the function of an industrious German student; so he was following in the train of Leibnitz, and rivalling his universality. But then Wolff perceived that there was a want of condensation in Leibnitz; he had had many good thoughts, but they had not been properly labelled and put into their right places. Wolff was the very man to do this work. For him it did not signify what Locke might say or think about the ocean of Being. The old title, Ontology, subsisted; how could there be a complete course of studies without something which should bear that title? So there must be, of course, also physiology, psychology, theology; in fact, what will become of us and our schools if any one faculty is wanting in them? Assuming this as the paramount necessity, the next questions—What shall these faculties do?—what shall our ontology, physiology, psychology, theology consist of?—become much easier; such as will be sure to settle themselves satisfactorily. Wolff is a mathematician. Descartes thought mathematics the great instrument of culture. No doubt he was right so far. In all candour, let us concede so much to the Frenchman. As for his self-questioning, his long process of arriving at principles, what is that to us? If he was right, all that process is finished—we can give the result in some manual which can be learnt by heart, and which will make the discussion on method wholly superfluous. But he cannot have been wholly right. Leibnitz differed from him. We must have a place in our scheme for the monads as well as for the atoms —for neither without the other; justice should govern all our dealings with our predecessors. And if the atoms and the monads are at all unfriendly—if either try to lord it over the other, by taking off the rough edges of each, by merely emptying each of that which their respective admirers felt to be its distinctive characteristic, they may be brought into a harmony, not, perhaps, exactly into that pre-established harmony which Leibnitz dreamt of, but into one quite as good, and more convenient for all doctrinal objects.

A strict German.

Aims to be more universal than Leibnitz; more definite.

Arranging faculties.

All conclusions admitted; only the steps to them omitted.

Wolff not exclusively German.

74. Modern Germans are wont to complain that Wolff, in much of his system, accommodated himself to the English and French philosophy of his day; that the protest of Leibnitz against Locke was not really maintained by his successor. Had it

been otherwise, we do not see how Wolff's lessons could have obtained the great hold which they did obtain in the German schools of the eighteenth century. That which is utterly opposed to the spirit of a time cannot anywhere be received in that time. Nor is it inconsistent with this opinion that Wolff was strictly a dogmatist; that scepticism was foreign to his nature. For there was much dogmatism both in France and England; the denunciation of all past philosophy, the denial of men's right to make any search in those directions in which they had been wont to search most diligently, was itself a dogmatism. But so far as France or England cared more for common practical lore than for school lore—so far as Englishmen were pursuing experiments rather than accepting conclusions—so far Wolff was not a plagiarist from them. Apparently he was doing more than any contemporary philosopher to disconnect knowledge with life, to make men into walking books. An instinct that this would be the effect of his labours seems to have set Francke and the German pietists of that time in deadly hostility to him. We may cherish the hope that, if Francke had been left to himself, his good sense or his faith in the truths which he himself proclaimed, would have hindered him from taking any steps to silence Wolff. But the leaders of schools are never left to themselves. A man named Lange pointed out a set of dangerous propositions which were to be found in the lectures and printed books of the Professor. By fair means or foul he must be driven from Halle. It was not difficult to convince the sot who was then on the throne—liable as he was to maudlin fits of devotion—ready as he was to avail himself of any excuse for an act of despotism—that such a man should not be allowed to teach in his dominions. Francke returned thanks to God for the deliverance of Halle, and for the religion of the king. And this was the result: The doctrine of Wolff spread itself in all directions. It was accepted in all German universities. It was honoured in various parts of Europe. The most formal of writers became the representative of free thought. The hardest of dogmatists was accepted as a martyr to science. Frederick William became convinced of his orthodoxy, and withdrew his ban from him. He returned in triumph to Halle. Whatever his system may teach us, his life surely contains a lesson which should not be lost upon those who most need it—and certainly will not.

Unlike Frenchmen and Englishmen in his preference of school lore to practical business.

The pietistic opposition to him.

Wolff's persecution.

The effect of it upon his fame.

75. A teacher whom Frederick William hated, the Prince Frederick was likely to esteem. The German doctor for a while expressed to him that liberalism which he wished to embody in his life and acts. But there came to Reinsberg an avenger of Francke and the pietists—a new defender of the faith.

Conversion of Prince Frederick by Voltaire.

"In that retreat," writes Condorcet, "Frederick—passionately in love with the French language, with poetry, with philosophy—chose Voltaire for his confident and his guide. They sent each other their works; the prince consulted the philosopher about his duties; sought in all things for his counsels and instructions. They discussed the most curious as well as the most insoluble problems of metaphysics. *The Prince was at that time a student of Wolff. He soon renounced his system and his unintelligible dialect for a philosophy more simple and more true.*"

What it means.

These words do not chiefly concern the great Prussian and the great Frenchman. Their friendship was soon to be interrupted; their quarrels were to form a memorable chapter in the history of the quarrels of authors and of kings. But Frederick is what is called, in our days, a "representative" man. The victory over him, which Condorcet celebrates, was in truth a victory of France, over Germany. It was the Jena of the eighteenth century. It was the fall of a lifeless native system before a foreign force still in the vigour of its youthful tyranny. How can any German regret the triumph either of Voltaire or of Napoleon? Each was clearing the way for the rise of his own conquerors. Wolff could only have produced a race of those Wagners whom Goethe has described with such wonderful genius, and from such bitter experience, in his *Faust.* The pedantical dogmatism must first yield to the "simple and true philosophy" of the Encyclopédists, if a real "critical" philosophy was to try the worth of both.

A triumph not to be regretted.

Swedish philosophy. Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772.)

76. Leaving Germans and Frenchmen to fight out their battle, we may turn for a moment to a country which, at the beginning of this century, had been governed by a warrior almost as brilliant as Frederick was to be himself, and also one of Voltaire's heroes. In the year 1718 Charles XII. of Sweden was besieging Frederickshall. To aid him in that work two galleys, five large boats, and a sloop, were transported a distance of fourteen miles from Stromstadt to Iderfjol. The rolling machines which conveyed them were invented by a young man, then thirty years of age, whose name is Emanuel Swedenborg. In his character of a mechanician and profound physical investigator, he was recognized by his most accomplished countrymen, as well as by foreigners, and was the subject of a posthumous eulogy pronounced in the great hall of the House of Nobles, in the name of the Royal Academy of Sciences, in Stockholm, in 1772, by M. Samuel Sandel, Counsellor of the Royal Board. In England he is chiefly thought of as head of a religious sect, small in number, which assumes the name of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem in the Apocalypse. There must surely be some bond which links

His mechanical and scientific fame.

these extremes together. Is there anything in Emanuel Swedenborg of which a moralist and metaphysician, wishing to be as far removed from the noise of sects as from the artillery of Charles XII., is bound to take account?

Wolff and Swedenborg.

The spiritual and natural world.

Heaven and hell.

God only known as man.

77. Christian Wolff had heard of Swedenborg's reputation as a scientific man; probably also of various strange opinions which he was reported to have entertained on metaphysical subjects. He seems to have desired to cultivate intercourse with him, not without a secret hope, we imagine, that his great eclectical system might be enlarged by the contribution of some speculations or dogmas from the accomplished foreigner, which, after due adjustment would fall into their own places beside the monads or the atoms. But Swedenborg's thoughts could by no possibility be accommodated to such a system; they could not be disposed under any one of the faculties. There was in them a strange mixture of pneumatology, psychology, ontology; but to which department they could be best assigned, even so skilful a systematizer as Wolff must have been puzzled to decide. Two worlds presented themselves to the mind of Swedenborg, entirely distinct from each other, in one sense opposed to each other, yet having the most remarkable correspondences. The light and the heat in the one answered to the Wisdom and Love in the other. It was a cold, earthly, utterly false conception which confounded these together, or which made the latter in any sense the images of the former. It was a divine, heavenly intuition which beheld the Love and the Wisdom as the true substance and ground of things, which discerned in the earthly light and heat the natural likenesses or counterparts of the spiritual. When men pass out of this earthly region they know these spiritual realities to be their proper home. They may be in harmony with them, or in discord with them; in heaven or in hell. Swedenborg believed that his eyes had been opened to see those things which men had not seen before. He saw things as the angels see them. He had visions of heaven and hell. He could converse with those who dwelt in them; for man, he believed, had a direct relationship to God. Nay, it was more than a relationship. The God-Man was the only object of worship. To apprehend God except as man, was to deny His nature, to introduce a practical atheism.

The two sides of Swedenborg's character.

78. So believed and so taught one of the most eminent students of the eighteenth century; one, as some have thought, though differing widely from him, who best deserves to be reckoned among its men of genius. In these meditations we can discern a meeting-point between the inventor of machines for conveying artillery and the apostle of the New Jerusalem Church. The inventor is the finder. What he lights upon, what he is able to

He shares the weakness of Inventors.

work upon, is in some sense *his*. He has a right to claim it; and yet he knows that it is not his. It belongs to nature, to mankind, to God. In every man the battle is fierce between these two convictions. The modest Newton, the far-seeing Leibnitz, in their quarrel about fluxions, showed how great it is.

and of religious teachers.

As strikingly has the head of every school and sect illustrated the same truth. Each one has perceived that which the world had a right to know, which it was good for men to know. Each has drawn a set of disciples after him, who have believed that he had some special right to those things which, nevertheless, he proclaimed to be universal. The school has endorsed and sanctified his self-idolatry, has boasted most of that part of his teaching which set him at war with other men. Science and faith have a reconciliation then in their weakness, as Leibnitz maintained that they had in their strength. If Swedenborg had only been born to illustrate *that* resemblance between them, he might not have been born in vain. But he was born, we think, for a much higher end.

What is not peculiar but universal in him.

His belief in a spiritual world in which men may actually dwell, of a kingdom of heaven into which men may enter, was not much newer than the New Testament. His belief of a relation between that world and the outer world had been set forth in parables which were said to declare things kept hid from the foundation of the world, and which declared them not to illuminated Swedes, but to the fishermen and peasants of Galilee.

Our obligations to him.

Yet it may be that these principles were hidden from the wise and prudent in the eighteenth century—from its divines as much as from its philosophers. It may be that the principles had very curious relations with thoughts that seemed to start from an entirely different point; with both the physical and the metaphysical controversies of that time. It may be that when they dawned upon a man in the midst of his physical experiments, they came upon him with such a sense of their reality, that he was dazzled with the excess of light, and yielded to the confusions of the visible with the invisible, of which he was giving other men warning. In that part of his speculations which referred to the union of Godhead with manhood he may have had a glimpse of the very principle which was wanting to give both a scientific and a practical basis to the theology and philosophy of his century; whilst, at the same time, by his negations and his inclination to substitute a theory of his own for the common faith of mankind on that subject, he may have been one of the instruments in preparing the way for the humanity-worship of our age.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LATTER HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Locke's position among foreigners. **Leibnitz.** **Wolff.** **Voltaire.** **Vico.** **Swedenborg.**

1. ENGLISHMEN must always feel a certain suspicion of themselves when they assign a very prominent position to a philosopher of their own land or race. But the evidence of Germans and Frenchmen has, we think, sufficiently justified us in putting Locke at the head of the period which we have just been considering. So early as the year 1707 we have found Leibnitz according to the *Essay on Human Understanding* the authority almost of a text-book, the principles of which it behoves him, learned student as he is, with a wide European fame, only to arraign with great caution and diffidence. His successor, Wolff, though as unlike Locke in his character and aims as one man can be to another, though restoring much of the scholastic nomenclature which he has cast aside, yet consciously or unconsciously adopts many of his decrees into his system, because his business is to present, in a convenient technical form, whatever has become part of the received opinion of the age. Voltaire builds the new philosophy upon the Lockian basis; nay, scarcely goes farther at first than to claim Locke as the destroyer of all that has preceded him. Vico in the South, Swedenborg in the North, are the only effectual protesters against the English ascendency; and the experimental form which their lessons assume, as well as the vast difference between them and the philosophers of the last century, bear witness to the extent of that ascendency.

His French successor.

2. It would be a blunder of national vanity to extend this remark into the period which comes next under our notice. The lively Parisian stooped to the sober sage of Wrington; but he stooped to conquer. From the middle of the century his acknowledged reign commences. It was not formally established over us as over Germans. No English prince surrendered at discretion to him as Frederick of Prussia had surrendered; for our princes were not troubled with notions about ontology or psychology derived from Wolff or any one else. Queen Caroline indeed remembered Leibnitz, patronized Butler, and received compliments from Montesquieu. But her husband was not the heir of any of her learned treasures. Her son, though

as inclined as his Prussian namesake to adopt any opinions that might be distasteful to his parents, found sufficient vent for his rebellion in joining the parliamentary opposition. George III., a Briton born, hated all philosophies, English, German, and French, with much impartiality and cordiality. His subjects generally participated in his sentiments. England, as such, after the middle of the century, cared little for any modes of thinking which did not connect themselves directly with politics, or directly with the religious life of individuals. In Scotland it was otherwise. But we cannot trace the Scottish philosophy of this time, however much we may desire it, to English influences. Hume restored the old alliance between France and Scotland. If the philosophical faculty in him was Scotch, all the impulses which called it into activity, and gave it a direction, were French. From France, then, we must learn what were the subjects which occupied men in this time; under what aspects they were disposed to contemplate those subjects. Then we shall understand much better what help writers in the English or the German tongues were contributing to the illustration of the same subjects; to what extent they were conspiring with or counteracting the Gallican tendencies.

England abandoning Philosophy.

Scotland learns from France.

Preponderance of Physics.

3. But if we would understand the France of this period we must not forget what it had learnt from the England of the last. Ever since Bacon there had been a strong conviction in men's minds that they ought to investigate the physical world, and that they could investigate it with a security of obtaining results. Ever since Bacon's time there had been a growing conviction that the investigation of nature was hindered by all attempts to introduce into it the forms of logic or the assumption of final causes. Facts were to be questioned; the mode of extracting the answers from them required the profoundest consideration. At all events there must be no anticipation of these answers. Logic and theology must be warned not to interfere. Then came Locke insisting that physics should not be the only or the main subject of human inquiry; insisting that neither physical investigations, nor any other, could be pursued honestly and successfully unless men began with investigating their own faculties; else they might employ them upon tasks to which they were not adapted. He accepts the Baconian doctrine as applicable in this region also. The facts of the mind are to be examined. There are to be no presumptions. Here arise two difficulties. The first is this. The forms of logic, being forms of our discourse, may disturb inconveniently an examination into the facts of the outward world, which is not, or which is certainly not proved to be, subject to these forms. But must they not introduce themselves into the examination of that creature who

Strengthened and modified by Locke.

What has Logic to do with the human understanding?

seems tied and bound by them? Can we rigidly adhere to a rule in considering human beings, which is applicable to the rest of nature precisely on account of its difference from them? A man has no business to say that the world follows the course of his thoughts. Can he say that the course which they follow does not concern *him?* The second is this. We must not force theology, that is to say, our belief, derived from whatever source, about the purposes of God in creating the world, or about the mode of its creation, into an examination of the facts which lie before us; otherwise we shall pervert those facts; they will not give back to us faithful reports of their meaning, only something which we have put into them. But does this rule apply to man? Can he investigate his own nature without taking into account any relation which there may be between it and the Divine nature? Can the question whether the relation exists or not be ignored in such an inquiry?

What has Theology to do with it?

4. How Locke dealt with both these questions we have seen. Fully determining to begin with the impressions which are received through the senses—denying that there can be any sound or safe method of investigation except this—the forms of logic did not present themselves to him as expressing laws by which the intellect of man is bound; they were merely general notions at which we arrive when we have grouped together certain of our sensible impressions and our observations upon them. The theological difficulty is similarly overcome. Whatever beliefs a man, or a society of men have, cannot be discovered among the first impressions on the senses of a child. They must therefore be the results of a number of processes of which these sensible impressions were the commencement. The belief in God can only be one of these beliefs. It may be the most important of all; it may be the most general of all: but it must be treated as one of a class. The higher it rises in the scale of dignity, the less can it be recognized as a common possession of the most ignorant creatures.

How Locke disposes of these questions.

5. We have seen what assistance Locke had in maintaining these positions among his own countrymen, and those who were sprung from his own countrymen; what hinderances they threw in his way. (1.) He had help from the taste for natural studies which Bacon had promoted, which Newton and Boyle had mightily developed: *first,* because he seemed to be pursuing a course of thought which was akin to the physical course; *secondly,* because he was connecting man himself much more closely than he had been connected hitherto with the objects wherewith he conversed through his senses. He was obstructed by these natural inquiries: *first,* because they made men distrustful of those impressions on the senses from which he appeared to deduce all the conclusions of science; *secondly,*

Locke assisted by the students of nature.

They also hinder him.

because the study of nature, though not pursued under the restraint of theological opinions—though its results were in contradiction to the current inferences from Scripture which had been sanctioned by ecclesiastical decrees—yet introduced the feeling that there is a testimony of God in the natural world to men of every speech and language, though many may, through calamity or wilfulness, not receive the benefit of it. And though this feeling was seriously weakened by the ingenious and able efforts of Clarke and others to draw it out into a formal intellectual process of proof, yet it pervaded most men of the period, Locke himself being as much affected by it as any; those who differed from him in rejecting Christianity, dwelling upon it with great vehemency, and making it one of their reasons for considering a revelation unnecessary. Now, though this kind of evidence was very different from the Cartesian demonstration, yet in practice they often approached each other very nearly. And though it might be said that this was a sensible evidence, since it spoke through the objects of the senses, and had nothing to do with the constitution of the mind itself—yet there was considerable difficulty in avoiding the old notion that there must be something in the man which was prepared to receive such a testimony, seeing that, as Locke said, it was not one of the sensible impressions made upon the infant; and yet, as Deists and Christians appeared to agree, it affected those who were not capable of formal ratiocination. (2.) Any disadvantage which Locke's doctrine suffered in this way was more than balanced by the support which it received from divines, Romanist as well as Protestant, who had begun to dread the innate ideas of Descartes and Malebranche, because they recognized in all men a certain perception of that which is spiritual and divine. Though Malebranche had taken immense pains to show that this conviction presumed divine revelation and grace—though no one had denounced Spinoza more strongly than he had—the great body of the clerical teachers in that day (Stillingfleet was an exception in his class, not, as Voltaire supposed, a specimen of it), and a still greater portion of the nonconformist teachers, counted it an immense deliverance, that they might dismiss all idea of divine intuitions in man, and might attribute any discovery of God to his creatures, when it was formal and intellectual, to ordinary tradition and education; when it was vital and real, to the process which they denoted as the "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." But on the other hand, these religious teachers of every school interfered with the full reception of Locke's doctrines, inasmuch as they called all men to confess such obligations to God as *implied* relationship to Him;

Natural Theology.

How it threatens to revive the belief of an innate idea.

Locke aided by divines.

Their zeal against intuitions.

Their inconsistency.

inasmuch as they treated the absence of belief as sin; inasmuch as they spoke of the acknowledgment of spiritual obligations and of a spiritual Being, by the conscience, as an "awakening to the knowledge of the truth." Acts and language of this kind, however they might be explained into accordance with the Lockian hypothesis, seriously hindered the entertainment of it as a practical solution of the facts of human experience. But (3.) Nothing, we have seen, was so helpful to the triumph of Locke as the feeling that he expressed the plain convictions of the man of the world as opposed to the teaching of the schools. That union of letters with fashionable life which characterized the beginning of the eighteenth century, and which is livingly exhibited to us in the Spectator's Club, was eminently favourable to such a philosophy as his. So long as Addison represented this union, Locke was sure to hold his ground in his double character of Whig and of a sober Christian moralist. But Addison's reign ceased, and he left no heir. The men of wit and fashion about town, however they might welcome Locke as a temporary ally against the priests, felt that they wanted a much more efficient and decided ally. From his premises Butler might contrive to deduce the idea of a moral government of the world, and of a law binding on the conscience. The young French visitor to our shore, though so ardent a disciple of Locke, was evidently far more in sympathy with all their wants than he had ever been. Voltaire embodied the fellowship of books with conversation which Addison had only introduced. On the other hand, a new school of literature was gradually forming in England, which was indeed connected closely with life, but with a toilsome, rough, sorrowful life, wholly unlike that of the Shaftesburys or Bolingbrokes. The Johnson Club was to supersede the club at Wills's. Johnson was in alliance with the booksellers, not with the Chesterfields. A philosophy which affected to remove any difficulties, to disguise the actual miseries of existence, to suggest any dreams of perfectibility, was for him an odious delusion. Though not deriving much hope or consolation from the Christianity which he had inherited, it seemed to him immeasurably better than anything which had been set up in opposition to it. Locke, as a Whig, could never command any of his sympathies. For anything that was Scotch or French he had an instinctive repugnance.

Locke's help from men of the world and men of letters.

Addison.

The wits seek another philosopher.

Johnson

The anti-philosopher.

6. It is clear, then, that English philosophy had done all at present that it could do. The name was to pass into another country, and to be claimed as its possession. *How* it was to be claimed, in what character it was to present itself, we have learned a little from the letters of Voltaire on England. We must not allow the impression which these letters have made on

France becomes professed home of philosophy.

us to be effaced by a phrase which has been current in our time. *Victorious Analysis* has been spoken of as characteristic of the latter part of the eighteenth century. There is truth in this

Analysis.

assertion. There was to be an analysis in France of the operations of the human mind, of the constituents of human morality, of the elements of social life. It was to be undertaken by thinkers of various kinds, some quiet and cold, some fiery. It was to become ultimately a very practical analysis. Again, in Germany, the questions—what analysis means? what are its uses and its limits? how it is to be conducted? were to find able men in very serious occupation, and were to produce important replies.

Not characteristic of the Encyclopedists.

But we shall go strangely wrong if we take a rigorous analysis, or rigorous study of any kind, to have been the characteristic of that philosophy which was subduing France, and which was for awhile to subdue Europe. The evidence of Voltaire's admiring biographer—writing under all the feelings and inspirations of the eighteenth century—sending forth his book in the memorable year 1789—is decisive as to the kind of power which had been exerted over him and his contemporaries.

Why Voltaire was recognized as *the* philosopher.

Voltaire is emphatically the philosopher, the parent of the new philosophy. But he is so because he is the popular man of letters; because he is able to make himself heard by people who would naturally never think of philosophy, who would hate it, if it were not presented to them through poems and novels. He is so because he is the man of wit, whose sayings are reported in all circles. He is so because he has the ear of sovereigns who pay him homage, and who receive a homage from him, which Condorcet, himself tending rapidly to republicanism, has some difficulty in excusing. As clearly does Condorcet make us perceive to what ends Voltaire was devoting himself, why the youth of France worshipped him, why the princes of Russia and of Germany accepted him as their guide. The priests were the common foes of the enthusiasts for freedom who followed Lafayette to America, and of the Continental despots. Theocracy stood forth before each as a doctrine essentially heartless, insincere, enslaving; yet mighty to bind and loose; to coerce opinion; to create opinion; to prohibit the thoughts of the few; to excite the passions of the many; to hinder changes; to produce revolutions.

The priestly bonds.

Monarchs felt themselves bound by the same chains which bound their subjects. They seemed made of gossamer; they had become as firm as iron. Who forged them? Were they divine? Were they the inventions of canonists, popes, confessors? Who could say? At all events the effect of the confusion was to make the ten commandments as odious, as little credible, as all that had been grafted upon them. The libertine said the priests wished to restrain him. But they wished as much to restrain any

Who groaned under them.

Voltaire's charm.

one who spoke a word against their oppressions. They had encouraged Louis XIV. in laying Europe waste. They had winked at his amours. They had asked for no expiation except the persecution of their enemies. Since his death the priests had proved themselves impotent to produce morality in court or nation; powerful to influence parliaments, mistresses, courtiers, when any abuse was to be preserved, any act of injustice to be perpetrated. They preserved the tradition of a righteous judgment, strong enough to bind the highest and protect the lowest. They asked help of the strong against the weak; they continually confessed their distrust of their own efficiency. Yet there remained in them that which the strong and the weak, the tyrant and the slave, equally desired to be rid of. So numbers turned to Voltaire, because they believed he had discovered the secret of dissolving invisible terrors; because they understood that these chains, whether of gossamer or iron, could be broken by his magic. We have said already that he could not have won this reputation if he had not put forth honest efforts and made real sacrifices of time and money in resisting evil acts that were done under religious pretexts. Such a memorable service as he performed in the case of the Protestant Calas must not only have increased the belief of others, but his own, that it was his vocation to undermine the foundations of a power that seemed to him, as well as to his countrymen and his regal disciples, so mighty and so hateful.

Condorcet's godly doctrine, p. 130.

The fall of the Jesuits and the humiliation of the popedom a confirmation of it.

7. In one memorable passage, which cannot be meditated too much, Condorcet expresses an opinion upon the subject of this power, which appears to us strictly in harmony with Christian doctrine—not the least in harmony with Voltaire's. "La France, l'Europe entière, connurent les usurpations et la dureté de ces prêtres hypocrites *qui osaient se dire les disciples d'un Dieu humilié et voulaient conserver des esclaves.*" Such a contrast must strike with tremendous force all believers in a *Dieu humilié.* They must read in the fall of that great theocratic society—from which Voltaire had derived his first lessons, and for which he had always a lingering fondness, at least when he thought of the Jansenists—some evidence that a king who had humbled Himself, and taken on Him the form of a servant that He might redeem men from bondage, did not sanction the assumption of His name by the most organized tyranny which the earth ever saw. They may read the same lesson in the subsequent humiliation of that older and more august form of theocracy which this society had so long upholden, and which at last deserted it. They may look upon these as signs of what must come to pass everywhere, if the divine titles and powers intended for divine ends are converted to devilish uses. But Voltaire believed that it was his mission to show that there was *not* a *Dieu*

Voltaire's battle and weapons.

Voltaire and Franklin.

La Pucelle.

humilié; that all ideas connected with that idea were essentially ridiculous. No instrument which could contribute to this end was wanting. The passion of showing that "what it was boasted that twelve men had been able to establish, one might destroy," became the passion of his life. He did not strike at the outside of institutions, but at their inside. He could build a church; he could insist upon receiving a solemn communion at the hands of the curé of his district. By such acts he worked as effectually as by his words. He showed his own sense of the unreality and hollowness of the whole system, and strengthened his countrymen in their sense of its unreality and hollowness. At the same time he was undermining as deliberately and as successfully the supports which these institutions still derived from old records of French virtue and patriotism. On the memorable occasion of Voltaire's last visit to Paris, when his ovation was mingled with one to Franklin as the representative of transatlantic liberty, the descendant of old Puritans will have heard the cry "*Vive la Pucelle*" amidst the other applauses to the genius of his friend. If he understood the meaning of that cry, did he hold it a triumph of France over an old superstition, that she supposed her deliverer from the English yoke to be a vulgar harlot instead of an inspired heroine? Did he think that the dissolution of reverence for the female character was the best possible preparation for civil and political freedom? Did his "*ça ira*" include what was to rise out of such demonstrations? Whatever the republican may have thought, we can understand how well the Autocrat of all the Russias may have sympathized in such a vindication of the liberty which she had claimed for herself, in such an overthrow of the notion that a pure and devout maiden who dies for national independence is worthy of any reverence. When however, Franklin's *ça ira* became the hymn of France, Catherine was not prepared to join in the chorus.

Character of the Encyclopedic literature.

Philosophical histories.

8. What victories could analysis win that could compare with such victories as these? Even in those subjects which were deemed worthy of a serious treatment, skilful resumés of the results to which science had already attained, lively pictures of nature, rapid narratives sprinkled with reflections, were far more sought after and prized than any elaborate pursuit of principles not yet discovered. Buffon was the model of naturalists. Voltaire himself inaugurated the era of that which was called Philosophical History, wherein there was to be as little of dry discussion or formal criticism as possible; in which wisdom was to be insinuated, not enforced; wherein the lounger was to find himself suddenly, and to his own surprise, furnished with a scheme of life and divested of his prejudices. The main

object and effect of these able and entertaining histories was to glorify the present at the expense of the past; to make the past nothing except as it spoke through the thoughts, feeling, temper of the present. Most pleasant it was, and even, in a certain sense, edifying, to escape from that which was altogether dead to that which had a sparkle of life, if not life itself. The true Encyclopedist, then, had no natural fondness for analysis; but he hailed analysis with more or less sympathy if it proceeded in the right direction, if it helped to diminish the force of theocratic opinions, if it loosened the hold which the priestly code of morals had over the mind either of students or of the people. Voltaire himself had no liking for extremes. He would probably have been content to stop at Locke's point, so far as the doctrine of the origin of ideas was concerned. If that doctrine had undermined Plato, Aristotle, the Fathers, the Schoolmen, Descartes, it had done its work—why care to pursue it to any more remote consequences? Voltaire had been spending his life in overthrowing the sacerdotal ethics. He invoked a social morality which rebelled against them, partly as too severe, partly as permitting political crimes. He had no wish to see these social notions formally defined and established into a code. The world might not require them in that shape; they might be far less available as weapons of attack. Voltaire was born in the deistical period. Nature, it seemed to him, spoke of an intelligent artificer. Provided all notion of a divine government interposing in the affairs of men were shaken off, what harm could there be in a belief which was so generally entertained and which was so agreeable? Above all, he had no wish that any doctrine about the natural rights of men should disturb the plans of liberal despots, or interfere with the comforts of Parisian society. But the voice which calls spirits from the deep cannot always lay them. Voltaire might not care much for the psychology of Condillac. He might sympathize in a very moderate degree with the ethics of Helvetius. He might protest, sometimes with earnestness, against the resolute atheism of nearly all his colleagues in the *Encyclopedie.* He might look upon J. J. Rousseau as no less his enemy than any of the priests against whom they both protested, and who confounded them in their invectives. Nevertheless, the consequences of Locke's doctrine were to be fairly expounded. The idea of the man, stripped of all that is divine, was to be worked out. Atheism was to be vindicated, as the consistent faith of the time. And it was to be shown that the doctrine of a social contract involved considerably more than English whiggism, or than any philosophy which crowned heads could entertain and patronize.

The place of analysis in the philosophical scheme.

Voltaire wishes to stop at a certain point.

Opposed to atheism,

and to any formal assertion of natural rights.

9. Whatever relations Etienne Bonnet de Condillac might

Condillac (1715-1780.)

His Book on *Sensations*.

A joint production.

The statue.

hold with the philosophers of his days, he was himself an ecclesiastic, and never throughout his life showed any discontent with his calling, or with its profession and obligations. There was nothing in his practice which made the moral code of the Gospel a burden to him; nor does he seem to have felt that there was anything in his opinions which necessarily set him at war with the orthodoxy of his time. If we are to consider his book on *Sensations* (the one which contains his maturest reflections) as the hard philosophy of the time, it shows how very pleasant hard philosophy becomes in a Frenchman's hands. When the Abbé wrote his first book, *Sur les Connaissances Humaines*, he could not bring himself to accept the full force of Locke's argument from the man who was born blind, and who acquired the sense of sight; he still imputed to his earliest and simplest condition a portion of the knowledge which he had acquired. Conversation with an accomplished female disciple had gradually convinced him of his mistake. They had talked over the question of the origin of our different perceptions and faculties; to her clearness of mind Condillac modestly attributes the removal of mists from his own. He explains to a friend who had survived her what method she proposed and he adopted for arriving at an understanding of her own nature. They imagined a statue organized within as we are. They assumed its marble exterior to prohibit the use of any of its senses. They "retained to themselves the liberty of unfolding these senses one by one, at their pleasure, to the different impressions of which it was susceptible." They determined to use this liberty with the utmost fairness; so they selected for the first sense which they awakened in the statue, that of smell, as being reputed the meanest, and as contributing least to our knowledge. One can enter a little into the delight with which the friends may have welcomed the gradual appearances of humanity in their creation. Our own interest in going over the process under the Abbé's direction is much increased by the melancholy which is thrown over it by his remembrance of Mademoiselle Ferrand.

The statue begins to smell.

Attention.

Pleasure and pain.

10. Our smelling statue takes in the odour of roses, jasmines, violets, &c.; it does nothing else. These odours are its form of existence. Materialist philosophers are reminded, as Berkeley would have reminded them, that the statue knows nothing of matter. Presently we perceive that it is absorbed in the odour which it is taking in; it is capable of *attention*. That attention involves pleasure if the odour is agreeable; pain, if it is disagreeable. (The reader may stop the process to ask how an odour comes to be in itself agreeable or disagreeable; but let that pass for the present.) But it has thus far only pleasure and pain;

it is without *desires;* it does not wish for anything more or better than it has. So it must continue, if the attention which it bestowed on the odour did not revive the impression of it after the rose or the violet is gone. Our statue is beginning to *remember.* Now then its capacity of smelling becomes twofold; it is occupied partly with the smell that is, partly with that which has been. But *memory* is thus obviously only a kind of sensation, not always, though ordinarily, feebler than the sensation which is imparted by a present thing. The statue has now taken a wonderful step. It begins to distinguish *succession;* it has existed in a former state, or it has had a smell which it has not now; and so it becomes at once *passive* and *active*—*passive* in its reception of the odour from the odoriferous thing; *active* in the recollection of the odour which has departed. It cannot yet compare one state with another; they are simply states of its own; it cannot put them outside of itself. But as memory grows into a habit the recollection appears apart from the present smell; then arises the power of attending to the two different states, and that attention is *comparison.* Comparison involves *judgment.* Our statue is now able to determine which odours are desirable, which are offensive. Soon these judgments also turn into habits. Hitherto, however, it has never been *astonished* at anything which has been brought to it; roses, jasmines, violets, all have been taken as things of course. But when it enters suddenly upon a new smell, that is, upon a new state of being to that to which it has been accustomed, it has the capacity, nay, the necessity, of wondering. Still, we must not forget that all these emotions turn ultimately upon the pleasure and pain of the sensations; the nature of our statue depends upon these and these only. And upon these depends, also, the further development of its faculties. There are smells which have produced special pleasure when they were first entertained. They are recollected; they form a series; ideas which these sensations have produced are linked together. There are pleasures which are purely sensible; there are pleasures which belong to the memory; essentially they are the same. We call the one kind corporeal, the other spiritual or intellectual; but both are in truth equally spiritual or intellectual. The next grand progress in our statue (and it is a progress indeed) is to the sense of *want.* It is capable of recalling its smells or states of being. It remembers what is more agreeable than that in which it is now dwelling. It wishes to recover that. Perhaps it only wishes to get rid of a disagreeable condition; perhaps it aspires to one of positive pleasure: this principle is the same, though the exhibition of it is different. But how could a statue, called into existence by the genius of a Frenchman and Frenchwoman, however limited

Memory.

Succession

The statue passive and active.

Habit.

Comparison —Judgment.

Wonder.

A series of ideas.

Corporeal and spiritual pleasures.

Feeling of want.

Ennui.

the range of its perceptions, exist without *ennui?* That appears in due time. The statue has a smell which does not seem particularly pleasant. It recalls some very delicious smells that it once realized. What is the experience of this indifference and this recollection but *ennui?*

Imagination appearing in the statue.

What the imagination can do.

The statue only loves itself.

11. Our Frankenstein must, we think, begin to be alarmed at his monster. For now we find that it can actually regard past things as if they were present. Out of its memory has come *imagination;* and the imagination which is centred wholly upon smells must, Condillac thinks, be more intense than one which is occupied, as ours is, with various different impressions. This imagination may sometimes be crushed under the weight of immediate sensation, pleasurable or painful. When it is awake it can transpose or reverse the succession of ideas; it can introduce a host of new comparisons between them; and not only have acts of attention, memory, judgment, imagination, and the habits that grow out of the repetition of those acts, and the powers that accompany those habits been developed out of this single sensation of smell, but we soon discover that it becomes susceptible of various passions—hates, loves, fears, hopes. It hates past smells, loves some intensely that have given it intense pleasure, some moderately that have given it moderate pleasure. Unhappily, as Condillac remarks, "that love of which our statue is capable is only love of itself, or that which is called *amour propre*, since the things that it loves are only its own modes of existence." Its fear of bad smells, and its hope of good smells, may grow, we can easily conceive, into very absorbing and terrific states of feeling. And at last we have the satisfaction of knowing that it is no longer confined to desires—it *wills;* for "we understand by will an absolute desire, and such a desire that we think the thing that is desired is in our power." Having got so far, we should expect that the statue would acquire the power of abstracting a general notion of smells from those particular smells which have given it pleasure or pain; that it would get at the idea of number by recollecting a particular sensation, and then another, and then another; that not being able to compare more than three conditions of existence together, whatever lies beyond that becomes for it the *infinite* or the *indefinite*, about which it knows as much, in Condillac's opinion, as any of us. It learns to distinguish particular truths from general truths, the possible from the impossible, a duration past from a duration to come. The statue may, however, be reduced to the condition of only remembering an odour; its existence may be suspended; it may sleep, pleasantly or unpleasantly, with dreams or without—but its dreams, pleasant or unpleasant, will be of successions, more or less regular, of smells;

Will.

Abstraction.

Number.

The statue philosophizing.

The statue asleep.

all which will, for the time, be as real to it as its waking smells. And now comes what may be considered the sum of the whole matter. We must give it in the writer's own words—"*Notre statue étant capable de mémoire, elle n'est point une odeur qu'elle ne se rappelle en avoir été une autre. Voilà sa personnalité: car si elle pouvait dire* moi, *ella le dirait dans tous les instants de sa durée; et a chaque fois son* moi *embrasserait tous les momens dont elle conserverait le souvenir.*" "In truth," he goes on, "the statue would not say this at its first smell. That which we understand by these words appears to me to belong only to a being which remarks that, in the present moment, it is no longer that which it has been. So long as it does not change it exists without any return upon itself; but as soon as it changes it judges that it is the same which was before, and it says, *I.*"

The statue an *I.*

How the sense of personality comes.

The result.

12. Condillac and his friend were of course not satisfied with testing their principle by one sense. The statue had each imparted to it in turn. But the specimen we have given will suffice to convey a notion of the Abbé's method, as well as of the conclusion to which he would conduct his readers. Supposing any of the persiflage which his contemporaries bestowed upon older philosophers and theologians had been applied to his conception, we need scarcely say how much amusement the Parisians would have derived from the smelling statue. Reading this eighteenth century romance with English gravity and dullness, we can only admire the vivacity of the author's imagination, and try to profit by the hints—some of them, especially that respecting the sense of personality, it seems to us, very rich and suggestive—which he has accumulated. If we were forced to consider whether Condillac had proved his point, the thought would at once suggest itself, that the whole proof had been taken for granted. A lady and gentleman, endued with memory, judgment, comparison, imagination, capable of love, hatred, fear, each of them being an *I*, set themselves to conceive how all these treasures might possibly become the inheritance of a creature that was without them. At every step we are reminded that they are lavishing upon him their own stores. Just what Condillac says was the fault which he committed at first, is that which he commits more flagrantly at last. The statue is never for a moment bare marble with a human organization. What Plato, and Spinoza, and all the old philosophers, have said about other statues applies to it. The ideal of what it is to be is in the artist's mind. It grows under his hand. It may be that he has given us the order in which the impressions would actually succeed each other in the mind of a child or of a man. It may be that our consciences sometimes respond to his history. But if they do, we feel all along that some one is educing them in that right order—some

Worth of Condillac's speculations and demonstrations.

The statue inconvenient to a formal disciple of Condillac's school.

Of great value to the historian.

Condillac on Aristotle and Locke.

Condillac's doctrine a fair development of Locke's.

Condillac pushes the doctrine of Sensation

one, moreover, who knows what there is to educe. Therefore, we suspect that all judicious disciples of Condillac are inclined to rid themselves of the statue. That stands in their way. They can trace the growth of ideas out of sensations much more conveniently without such a machinery. But this course, however convenient for their purpose, must be resolutely avoided by any one who professes to trace the thoughts of a man or of a period. He is bound to look out for all those circumstances which indicate what the actual processes of a man's mind have been; always to welcome any report of them which he has given himself. These are the links which bind us to him, which translate him from an abstraction into a person, which enable us to have living fellowship with the movements of his spirit, even when we do not reach his conclusions. And, for Condillac's own purpose, we cannot hold that his method is an unfair one. He has learnt in the schools Aristotle's dogma, "Nothing in the intellect which was not first in the sense." He has found, as he thinks, Aristotle producing systems of logic, and systems of various kinds, which are inconsistent with that dogma. He half suspects (unjustly, we conceive, and without due reference to one portion of Aristotle's labours, to which this maxim does furnish the text and the clue) that Aristotle merely adopted it in opposition to Plato. He thinks, at any rate, that it slept unheeded, and that all philosophy was running counter to it till Locke revived it, and demanded that our speculations should be brought into harmony with it. But then he conceives that Locke has not fairly faced the meaning of his own creed. Like Hartley and others whom we have mentioned already, he regards Locke's language about reflection as fatally inconsistent. Fairly, therefore, to work out his own maxim, entirely to throw aside everything which interferes with it, was a duty owing to him and to truth. Condillac may have thought that he was proving more than he did prove by his instance of a statue. But he was illustrating in the best way possible the mode in which a Lockian might satisfy himself about the generation of ideas from sensations; nay, the way in which he ought to satisfy himself, if he meant to hold fast by the maxim which was common to Locke and Aristotle, without admitting the qualification which Leibnitz had introduced into it. No doubt the Encyclopedists would have demanded of Condillac many further sacrifices which he was not disposed to make; they would have accused him and Locke equally of retaining various maxims about ethics and theology which they, starting from the same point, had cast aside as prejudices. But it seems to us all the more important, as an indication of the tendencies of this century, that a man who adhered generally to the popular belief, and who almost to its farthest limits, without being a materialist.

had less right to the name of a materialist than Hartley and many English Christians, nevertheless pushed the doctrine of sensation almost as far as it could be pushed. We say *almost* as far, because those merely physical philosophers who accepted the Cartesian doctrine of atoms omitting every other part of the Cartesian belief—those who regarded analysis as meaning merely the reduction of any composite thing into its elements—and those who explained more thoroughly than Condillac how the organization of the human creature might explain all its thoughts, sentiments, beliefs—must be regarded as advancing farther in this direction than he advances. But our business is with psychologists and moralists. What philosophers thought who were avowedly devoting themselves to physics only concerns us so far as their methods or their conclusions determined or were determined by those of the students of human nature.

Helvetius (1715-1771).

His new lights.

13. Condillac's real business was with the growth and formation of the intellect. His thoughts upon ethics are of far less importance to us. The mind in reference to its moral nature is the subject which Claude Adrien Helvetius claimed for his especial province. He speaks in the preface to the *De l'Esprit* of his object "as interesting and even new." "Up to this time," he says, "the mind has only been considered under some of its aspects. Great writers have only thrown a rapid *coup d'œil* over this subject; therefore, I have been emboldened to treat of it." Such a profession as this, after men had been for some thousands of years talking about the mind, to more or less purpose, may strike us as surprising. We may ask ourselves under what aspects the mind had *not* been contemplated by one great writer or another. The language, however, was perfectly sincere in the mouth of Helvetius. It would have been sincere in the mouth of most of his contemporaries. All had the sense of having entered upon a new era in the earth's history. The maxims, dogmas, schemes of education, which had established themselves in the world were exhausted. The religious sanctions, the moral code of society, had been weighed in the balance of centuries and found wanting. All things must become new. And if they were to become new, the reconstruction must, as Locke had intimated, begin from the mind itself Philosophers, religions, governments, all bore upon that. All assumed it to have certain functions, to exist for certain ends. All had acted upon it with a view to these ends. Were the functions rightly assumed? Were the ends which were sought for true ends? This Helvetius resolved to look into. "The principles," he says, "which I establish on this subject are, I think, in conformity with the general interest and with experience. It is by facts that I have mounted up to causes. I have fancied that we

The eighteenth century cry for novelty.

An experimental treatment of Ethics.

ought to treat morals like all the other sciences, and to have an experimental moral as much as an experimental physic." He quotes a sentiment of Fontenelle to the effect that it seems we can only arrive at something reasonable on any subject by first exhausting all possible absurdities about it. The ancients have gone through many of these absurdities; possibly he may utter some more; but he hopes that both his right sayings and his mistakes may contribute to the benefit of his fellow-citizens, and to the discovery of truth. We share this hope. In fact, we have no doubt that it *must* be accomplished, and that mainly because we hold some convictions respecting the mind which Helvetius would have rejected as among the oldest.

L'Esprit defined.

Helvetius not methodical.

De l'Esprit, discourse 4, tom. 2, p 89, Ed. Lond. 1776.

14. How much the reverence for novelty possessed Helvetius may be learnt from his definition of the mind itself. "Science," he says, "is the remembrance either of facts or of the ideas of others. Mind, as distinguished from science, is an assemblage of new ideas of any kind whatsoever." He admits that this definition, though true, and very instructive for a philosopher, cannot be generally adopted. To develop its full force, the mind is considered first in itself, then in its relation to society, then in its relation to education. A further discourse examines the different meanings which are given to the word mind; *l'esprit*, in its peculiarly French sense, being one of them, genius another. The reader will be struck with a want of method, or what we commonly call method in this disposition of subjects; the impression will rather grow upon him than be dispersed as he proceeds. He will often be forced to ask himself, at the end of a chapter, to what issue the topics that have been introduced into it are leading, and may be very grateful for the summary which the author gives us of the conclusions which he believes he has established. Oftentimes a person who has assumed that Helvetius represents the temper and sentiments of his own time will be struck with passages which appear to be directed against some of its special tendencies—those which were winning a triumph for the new philosophy. What shall we say of this passionate appeal to the youth of France respecting persiflage? "*Oh vous donc qui n'avez pas encore contracté cette funeste habitude; fermez l'oreille à ces louanges données à des traits satyriques aussi nuisibles à la société, qu'ils y sont communs. Considérez les sources impures d'où sort la médisance. Rappelez vous qu' indifferent aux ridicules d'un particulier le grand homme ne s' occupe que de grandes choses; qu'un* vieux méchant *lui paroît aussi ridicule qu'un* vieux charmant; *que parmi les gens du monde ceux qui sont faits pour le grand se dégoûtent bientôt de ce ton moqueur en horreur aux autres nations.*"

Helvetius opposed to persiflage.

Such a passage, though directed primarily against the gossip and scandal of drawing-rooms, may in part account for the dislike which Voltaire is said to have entertained for Helvetius, seeing that he had turned to such account the *ton moqueur* which he found prevailing in society, and had given it such a wide expansion. It should be received by those who dislike that tone in Voltaire as highly honourable to its author.

Derivation of ideas from sensation.

Helvetius follows Rochefoucauld.

Helvetius tries to make his doctrine of self-interest a social principle.

Class interests and general interest.

Education and legislation.

15. Helvetius starts from Locke, like Condillac. He follows the doctrine of Locke to the same consequences as Condillac, only with far less ingenuity. Judgment is sensation; sensation must be the standard to which all acts and all ideas are ultimately referred. These are fundamental maxims; our morality is determined by them. We are wont specially to connect with the name of Helvetius the doctrine that self-interest is the motive of all actions. But he frankly assigns the merit of this discovery to Rochefoucauld: the idea, however important and primary, is not one of the new ideas which he is appointed to develop. Looked at on the outside—studied in the pages of Rochefoucauld—one might suspect this doctrine of being rather hostile to the peace of society; one might look upon it as emphatically the denial of society. To exhibit it, on the contrary, as the law of society—as that which, if rightly applied, may promote its harmony, remove its anomalies, bring it to the highest perfection of which it is susceptible—is the design of Helvetius; this, he thought, with at least a pardonable vanity, had some claim to be considered a novel experiment. By gathering together a host of examples from history, or from fiction, which illustrate how the self-interest of each particular class has been at work to establish moral decrees which sustain its own credit and authority; by tracing to their root different influences of custom, law, religion, which have been used to persuade men that *their* self-interest was the same with the interests of certain classes; by pointing out how discordant these particular interests are with the general interest of men; by maintaining that there is no difference in men which may not be resolved at last into greater or less sensibility of pleasure or of pain; by referring to an erroneous education and legislation the direction of the sensations to wrong objects; by urging such a discipline as shall make them conspire with the aims of the philosopher and not of the enemies of philosophy; by maintaining the impossibility of a reform in education without some reform in legislation; Helvetius believed that he was presenting that new aspect of the mind and its operations which the circumstances of his age were demanding.

The judgment of Mackintosh

16. Sir James Mackintosh has spoken of Helvetius with a bitterness which is very rarely found in his writings. Many impulses would lead us to adopt his language in its full extent;

Motives for accepting it.

Reasons against it.

The inconsistencies of Helvetius of great use.

Self-love and social.

The reconciliation.

we may have motives for disliking Helvetius which his accomplished critic would have felt less vividly. But knowing how strongly these motives act upon us we are afraid of joining in the invective. Helvetius hated priests; hated their morality; hated everything which seemed to him to uphold their morality. To substitute a social and political morality for one which rests upon the acknowledgment of any relations between man and the unseen world was the main object of his life. If we could conceal from ourselves how much excuse the priests of his own land, and of all lands, had given him for supposing that self-interest was the mainspring of their actions, and that they recognized no other spring of the actions of any human being—if we could deny that he was generalizing from that which was most palpable in their practice, from the theory by which they explained and justified their practice,—we should eagerly cast stones at the philosopher who of all to whom we have yet alluded most affronts both our conscience and our vanity. The affront to vanity ought to be balanced against the affront to conscience. We may be better for being reminded what apologies we are continually affording for the unbelief of which we complain. We ought to be startled and ashamed by discovering, in the case of such a man as Helvetius, what a deep and true sense of the need for some universal morality—a morality which shall not be created by classes or individuals, but shall bind them—mingles with the despairing and, as it seems to us, utterly contradictory notion that such a morality can be built out of an aggregation of those private interests which are always threatening the well-being of the whole, and which have found their support and sanctification in a thousand dark and cruel superstitions. And yet beneath this very contradiction must lie the seed of the truth, that self-love and social are radically the same; that the highest individual morality, that which best provides for the development of the faculties of each man, is that which is wanted for humanity itself. To arrive at the solution of that great riddle, and with it, at the confutation of all the falsehoods with which either priests or philosophers have darkened the sense of right and wrong in individuals, or have made society intolerable, we must, as we believe, return to that ground above humanity which Helvetius resigned to the dark ages, and deemed untenable in the clear daylight of his own. But he may have been one of those who have cleared the way for the full investigation of the problem, by presenting it in all its practical force and terror, by compelling us to feel that earth, or hell, or heaven, must find some interpretation of it.

Education.

17. We hinted, when we were speaking of Locke's essay, that the real trial of its worth would be in education. The announcement that the senses are the sources of our ideas might be a

subject for discussion among doctors or among easy men of the world. One or the other might follow the dogma to its remotest consequences, or might suggest qualifications in it. But if the whole education of Christendom had been pursued in the method which was opposite to Locke's method—if what was called the humane learning of the schools presumed certain principles in man which demanded culture—if the place assigned to logic, to philology, even to mathematics, most of all to theology, in the old school or university course, could only be justified upon maxims which Locke had shown to be untenable—there must be a stout conflict between established institutions and the new faith. So far as that spread, these must be weakened, or must undergo some transformation. We may trace the battle in England during great part of the eighteenth century. But there the education of the public school—in a less degree of the university—however much mingled with Middle Age ideas, however inexplicable if they were utterly contradicted, had moulded itself to the national character, was in harmony with the habits of the aristocracy, in some degree with those of the people. Ecclesiastics conducted it, but their professional contributions to it were not deemed of any great significance. Noblemen and gentlemen believed that the writers of Greece and Rome expanded the intellects of their sons—made them fitter for general society; the addition of a little formal and rather pedantic indoctrination into the mysteries of the faith which they professed themselves was harmless and proper. There was, therefore, no formal rebellion against the existing system; only an occasional murmur or protest against it; the most serious proceeding from men, like the poet Cowper, whom their early experience and the strong religious convictions of their maturer life led to discover a great contrast between the apparent intention of our schools and their actual working. Such complaints, however they might affect the reputation of the English schools, had obviously little to do with the grounds upon which they were constituted or the lore which they imparted. Cowper would not have loved Westminster better if it had given him some modern substitute for the *Iliad* and *Odyssee*.

Opposition between the old system and Locke.

The English public schools.

Cowper's Tirocinium.

18. It was otherwise in France. Those who conducted the education there might indeed boast that it had a more modern as well as a far more organic character than ours. They could refer it, not to kings, statesmen, tradesmen of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, who had merely a general notion of forming scholars or men, but to a society of the sixteenth, which had adapted itself to the circumstances of its age, which had deliberately proposed education to itself as one of its principal aims, which had readily accepted all means, without reference to their antiquity, that were most likely to form able men,

The Jesuit education.

fit for the public service. This society had contended, in the seventeenth century, with its rivals of the Port-Royal on the very subject of education, and had prevailed against them. It availed itself of heathen classics, just as the English schools did. But they were evidently only a part of the teaching, and not, as with us, the characteristic part. Information on all other subjects was carefully prepared and digested. Even the *Principia* might be read as a curious and ingenious exposition of a theory which was undoubtedly false, because the Church had condemned it, but which had a certain plausibility. And the priests, as we have seen, had no natural aversion to Locke's fundamental dogma. They had deduced it from Aristotle, opposed it to what they conceived the rationalism of Descartes and Malebranche. The philosophers who were brought up under these teachers shook off their theology, but retained many of their lessons, and derived from them not a little of their superficial universality. Nor was the Jesuit system odious to *them* because it was artificial. So far as the artifice was ecclesiastical they of course rejected it. But the defender of the French theatre, the idol of French society, was not likely to be an assertor of the "natural" in any very severe sense of that word. Nature was no doubt to be greatly admired in its place and in its own way, but it required some aid from the *coiffeur* before it was presentable.

Use of the classics in England and France.

The philosophers.

Not assertors of nature in opposition to artifice.

19. The vindicator and worshipper of Nature was to come from another atmosphere than that of Paris, to be trained in another school than that of the Jesuits. Voltaire might retire to the neighbourhood of the city of Calvin,—Jean Jacques Rousseau was born in it. With a father who was a watchmaker, he, in the truest sense, belonged to the place. He inherited all its traditions. "In addition," he says, "to the general feelings which attached me to the worship of my fathers, I had the special aversion for Catholicism which belonged to my city. I had been taught to regard it as a frightful idolatry. Its clergy had always been painted to me in the darkest colours. The sentiment went so far with me that I never looked into the inside of a church, never met a priest in a surplice, never heard the bell of a procession, without a shudder of affright, which, though I soon lost it in the cities, often returned to me in country parishes where I first experienced it." Geneva had no doubt its own mode of controlling and counteracting nature as well as Paris; Calvinism might not have been more favourable to the growth of one who wished to shake off restraints than Jesuitism. But Rousseau's father was of no very strict type. He used to read romances with his boy, at seven years old, half through the night, and then remarked that he was the greater child of the two. His aunts, though

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778).

His early Protestantism.

His early discipline.

His change.

Preparation for his work.

His contradictions.

religious women, appear to have laid no heavy burden on him. His reading came to him he scarcely knew how. All his early studies were miscellaneous; yet he contrived in some way to husband a considerable stock of information about history, even about church controversies. A turn in his life came, when he passed under the yoke of a master, and, from being suspected, learnt to suspect others, and to cultivate arts of baseness and dishonesty. Then he fled from his country, and sought for freedom certainly in strange ways; first from a priest who sent him to Turin to be converted to Romanism; then among a strange circle of neophytes whom he found there; then as a lacquey in one family after another; finally at the feet of Madame Warens. By all this course of life, by his earliest and his latest republican attachments, by degrading personal experiences, by his intercourse with the opposite faiths, and by his impatience of each, by his passionate friendships and his passionate enmities, by his mixture of high and pure desires with an intense sensuality, by his love of the mountain air, his dislike of Parisian affectation, and the angry sense how much that affectation clave to himself, by all the influence which the age exerted over him, and by all his vehement efforts to shake himself free of that influence,—he was prepared to be the writer of the *Emile* and the *Contrat Social*, as well as of the *Nouvelle Heloise*, and *The Confessions*, and to exert a power over his generation unlike that of any of his contemporaries; often thwarting theirs, yet ultimately conspiring to produce the same result.

Emile ou de l'Education.

Locke's work *On Education.*

Rousseau's bears more directly on the great Essay.

20. *Emile* might be contemplated from many points of view. It links itself most closely with our story by the relation in which it stands to Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding.* We repeat the title at length, lest it should be supposed that we mean Locke's work *On Education.* That is an important treatise, so far as it illustrates the author's character; so far as it shows, more than any of his books, how much his medical discipline had affected his thoughts; so far as it has a bearing on the life of his pupil, Shaftesbury. But few books proceeding from so eminent a man have exerted so little apparent effect on his own age or on subsequent ages. If it offers the suggestion of a real, in place of a verbal or philological, education, it is a far less effectual suggestion than that which Milton had put forth many years before in his letter to Mr. Hartlib, and which, moreover, was the record of an actual experiment. It would be unjust to a treatise which has had so great an influence as the *Emile* to associate it with *this* *πάρεργον* of Locke. We are giving it its proper honour when we consider it the most complete practical development of a doctrine which claims to be in the highest sense practical, and which, if true, cannot remain a mere doctrine.

In saying this, we are far indeed from meaning that *Emile* is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Lockian decrees. On the contrary, we are convinced that it is a fruitful exposition of the wisdom which is contained in them, of the uses to which they may be turned. If we think, also, that it points out the limit of their application, that it justifies much old practical philosophy which Locke distrusted and Rousseau consistently rejected, we are only recognizing another service which it has rendered to the cause of truth. It may enable us to understand that no great man like Locke can be parted with merely in complimentary terms, as if he had done his work, until we have wrung from him lessons which are to endure for our children and our children's children.

Value of his book.

The right and wrong end in teaching.

21. That phrase of Locke's, which we have quoted so often, about beginning at the wrong end, never becomes fully intelligible till it receives the commentary of the *Emile.* The right or wrong end of a philosophical procedure may be a subject of debate. Rousseau tests it by its application to an actual child. Are you to treat this child as you find it, or as if it were something else than you find it? It is beginning to see, and smell, and taste, and handle. Evidently this is what it is first learning to do. Is the learning which you impart to be of a different character? Are you to give it credit for powers that are not awakened in it, and to task those? Do you think that you can put such powers into it? Do you think that you are wiser than its Creator, and that it is best to create it afresh according to some notion of yours? This is what you are actually doing. You put your child into swaddling-clothes. You remove it from its own mother. You give it to a foster-mother to nurse. Evidently you *do* think that all the arrangements which a divine wisdom has contrived for it are bad arrangements. You are certain that you can invent much better. And as you commence you go on. All your contrivances, from childhood upwards, have no other design than to counteract nature, to produce a creature which shall be as unlike as possible that which nature has meant it to be. What then? Are we to leave this creature to grow up at hazard any how? Do we make it natural by trusting it to chance? Perhaps more natural on the whole, more like a reasonable human creature, than by using those arts which are contrary to nature, which are merely defiances of nature. But it is not natural that a parent should neglect his offspring—should not bring a thousand influences to bear upon it. The child and the parent are naturally together. It is you, with your artificial schemes, who try to separate them. It is you who will not let the mother act as if she were responsible for her child. It is you who will not let the father be its teacher when it becomes capable of receiving

Rousseau's protests.

The parent's influence implied in nature wisdom from him. Start, then, with the correction of your practice in this respect. Do homage to these natural relations; and then you will consider the child itself rather than some scheme or plan of yours about the child. You will not be afraid to follow the course of its development. While you see that it is only exercising its senses, you will only deal with these. Whatever more you discover, or comes forth under your influence, you will recognize that, and cultivate that.

What Rousseau adds to the doctrine of sensation.

22. This is unquestionably beginning "at the *right* end." It is starting from facts, not from hypotheses. Only we conceive that Rousseau does more justice to the facts than any one who *merely* proceeds upon the hypothesis of sensation can do, inasmuch as *he* starts from the fact of a *relation*. The child sees the face of its mother as it sees the curtains of its bed. There is the same exercise of sense in both cases; but the one is a mother, and the other is the curtain of the bed, and that, we suspect, is a considerable difference to start with. If the method of dealing with facts, of resolutely ignoring whatever is not fact, leads us only to this point, we may be profoundly grateful for it. Without at once prejudging and condemning other methods till we know more of the reason of them, let us at least accept this, and determine that we will see whither it conducts us under Rousseau's guidance, or any other. He cannot trace out his method, however, without assuming a little more than he wishes to assume. He says solemnly, that if any parent asked him to undertake the education of a child he should refuse; that, indeed, he had refused, being convinced that he ought not to remove such a task from the hands of those to whom it was entrusted. But, since he cannot speak of abstractions, since he must have an actual subject for his experiment, he must presume himself in the charge of an orphan, to whom, for greater convenience, he will attribute certain external advantages of wealth and family, which he does not desire in themselves, which rather increase the difficulty of the experiment, but which will show that he is preparing a human creature, not for some imaginary circumstances that he might prefer, but for that artificial world wherein men and women are living in his time. The problem is so to unfold the mind of *Emile* that he shall be natural in the midst of this artificial world—that he shall be able to act in the circumstances by which he will be surrounded, and not to be merely shaped by them. Step by step, therefore, we follow the course of his awakening. All old notions which are in accordance with the swaddling-clothes and foster-mother maxims, which we rejected at the outset, are resolutely cast aside. The teacher has an infinite dread of book-learning. He does not care how long it is before

Emile an orphan.

To be prepared for the actual world.

Development opposed to indoctrination.

the pupil learns to read. When he does, it must be because he finds that it will enable him to get at some history that he wants without being dependent upon others for telling it to him. Always it must be the facts of the world, or the facts of life, that he is led to seize hold of. In every instance the object must be to cultivate, not to indoctrinate. Interpretations must be given when there is first a sense of the difficulty which requires them. Or rather, the pupil must be made to feel his way into them, to find them out for himself. The different applications of this practical and real method, both in Physics and Ethics, have become so familiar to us through the books of Miss Edgeworth and her father, and there have been so many improvements upon them in the country of Rousseau's birth, that we have no excuse for following his course of training, though it has not lost its interest for practice, far less for history, by the different trials that have been made of it. The immediate worth of it to us lies in the illustration that it affords us of the word which was dearer to Rousseau than any other, which has more to do than any other with the progress of thought in the eighteenth century, which bears more directly than any other upon the mighty catastrophe wherewith that century was terminated.

Nature.

23. We need not repeat that this word is *Nature.* How much it has troubled us in all our previous inquiries the reader will remember when he thinks of Spinoza, or of any one of the philosophers of earlier times. How much more serious it has become since the time of Locke, he will be aware if he considers the remarks that were made upon *natural* theology, upon *natural* religion, upon Butler's vindication of human *nature* in his sermons, upon the denunciation of that same human *nature* in the sermons of the Methodists. Rousseau troubles himself little with any of these. His mind is fixed upon the unnatural condition of things around him. All the efforts of those Catholics who superintend education in France, most of the efforts of those Protestants who superintend education in Switzerland or elsewhere, are directed to the task of crushing nature, of making men, women, and children unnatural. That, too, he conceives, is the main object of those who preside over social arrangements, of those who deal out praise or blame in assemblies or in journals, of those who legislate and govern, of the philosophers who are undertaking to set all things right. With these classes, and with the individuals who compose them, Rousseau has to do battle in the cause of Nature. All of them, he conceives, are in turn doing battle with him, betraying him, or plotting against him. We may call his opinion on this subject madness. And madness, no doubt, it was. But it was, if we may still further "take the wind out of that poor phrase,"

The unnatural in all classes and schools.

Rousseau and his enemies.

a *natural* madness—one which becomes very intelligible when we look at the character of the man, at the necessity which he was under of viewing nothing as abstract, all events and conditions as personal; and if again we reflect on the contradictions which were bewildering him, and more or less bewildering every one in that time. The *super*-natural, it must plainly be confessed, had come to identify itself with the *un*natural. That which was at the farthest remove from the simple and the manly seemed to be in the closest alliance with the spiritual and the divine. It was a frightful condition of things, portending issues which neither those who dreaded them nor those who hoped for them could the least foresee. If an art of education might be discovered that could bring back anything of simplicity and manliness, would not that art be the best possible imitation of nature? Would it not accord with the designs of nature? If it must, in accomplishing this end, dispense with the spiritual and the divine, was not that the proof that they did not belong any more to the time? If they could be maintained in harmony with nature, by all means let them have their place, though Rousseau might find it very difficult to ascertain what that place should be.

The super-natural.

Its place in education.

24. This is the subject to which he addresses himself in the latter and the most interesting part of the *Emile* (exclusive of the passages concerning Sophie); that part in which he introduces his celebrated profession of faith of the Savoyard curé. How is *Emile* to be taught theology? Why has that teaching been reserved to the final stage of his education, if it can be introduced there? Rousseau gives the answer which is apparently the one most consistent with his method,—I am following the nature of my subject; I cannot depart from that. I am to develop, not indoctrinate. If the other were my course I should have begun by giving him a catechism expounding the Christian mysteries. I do find in my pupil, unquestionably, readiness enough to accept an anthropomorphic religion. He would readily make an idol of any one he cares for. If I had frightened him with terrors in the dark I could have taught him to worship that at which he trembled. But if I am to make him prefer one belief to another I must forsake my method. I must no longer unfold his nature. Rousseau is not afraid of making his pupil too much of a believer. He is honestly afraid of leading him to believe nothing. He has seen terrible instances of that. He has seen some instances, also, of priests having courage to own that they cannot accept what they have been taught from their infancy, yet having the still greater courage to cling to the faith that is left them; to wait for more light, to trust that God is true whoever else may be

Theology of the *Emile*.

Children and men have a tendency to anthropomorphism.

Dread of utter unbelief.

false. That kind of faith he would encourage *Emile* to cherish. He would speak to him of God; yet how shall he overwhelm him with ideas of infinity and eternity which he cannot grasp? He is afraid to teach him what he thinks the incomprehensible doctrines of the New Testament. But he would cultivate his sense of right and truth. He would tell him of a Being who demands right and truth. He would utterly discard the philosophical attempt to confound Jesus Christ with Socrates, or with the best man whom the world has ever produced. The difference seems to him immense. "*Si la vie et la mort de Socrate sont d'un sage, la vie et la mort de Jesus sont d'un Dieu.*" The language may belong, dramatically, to the Savoyard curé; it is qualified by other language in this work and Rousseau's other works; but he does adopt it as the expression of at least one side of his mind.

Refuses to confound our Lord with any philosopher.

Difference between Montesquieu and Rousseau.

25. In fact, he did not require, like Montesquieu, a *religion* to be the column of society. We shall find presently that he thought society might dispense with such a column. But he did require a GOD as a column for himself. He could not meditate his own existence without one. Nor could he very well think of such a Being apart from that justice and truth which he took to be the human perfection. The highest life and death must be—however strange the words might sound—the life and death of a God. So that, if Rousseau could only have believed that to be true which he deemed to be almost necessary, he might, perhaps, have found an explanation of the anthropomorphic tendencies in his pupil and in different nations; he might have seen that a principle was underlying them which all separate idolatries, all attempts to make the divine in the likeness of the human, were setting at nought. And, suppose he could have gone a step farther—suppose he could have believed that that parental relation which he insisted upon so strongly as demanded for the proper education of the child, had itself a foundation—suppose he could have thought, as his ancestors thought, that there was a divine fatherhood implied in the human fatherhood—might he not have been relieved of some perplexities which attended the adoption of his method, from the fact that the idea of a divinity cannot really be reserved for the last step of development—that it haunts the teacher at every step, threatening, if not fairly encountered, to become some narrow corruption, some dark superstition, such as would most destroy the nature of the pupil? Might not the belief of *such* a relation, as presumed in all education, have accounted for that method opposite to his own—that habit of beginning at the wrong end, as Locke would have said—which had prevailed in earlier times? Might not the forgetfulness or imper-

Explanation of anthropomorphism.

The parental relation involving a higher relation.

Theological confusions and tyrannies produced by the forgetfulness of this relation.

feet recognition of such a relation, from one cause or another, in one division of Christendom as well as in another, have been the source of the efforts to force and twist the human plant—of the confusions between the unnatural and the supernatural, of which Rousseau complained with such good reason? Might not Rousseau's own idea of what nature is, and of the sense in which we are to follow it, have been cleared of many confusions seriously affecting his own life, and to affect his age, if the other principle of education were developed as well as that of the *Emile?*

The Confessions.

26. An invaluable help for the solution of this question lies in *The Confessions*. It has been a favourite practice with divines to compare that work with the *Confessions* of Augustin, and to draw various inferences respecting the difference between the moral condition of the Christian and the philosophical penitent, as well as between the fourth century and the nineteenth.

Augustin and Rousseau.

With reference to both points the parallel may be most instructive if it is rightly pursued. In the last it can scarcely be otherwise than useful, because it must be most humiliating to the teachers of the church during the intervening period; above all, in the age of Rousseau.

The supposed contrast between them.

The contrast which has been commonly noted as the characteristical one is this, that Augustin treats all the corrupt acts and feelings which he owns as sins to be mourned over; that in Rousseau they are merely parts of his nature which he lays bare, as an anatomist would lay bare different portions of the bodily frame. If by this statement it is implied that Rousseau draws no distinction between his different acts and feelings, that there are none upon which he pronounces a moral condemnation, and for which he feels an intense and abiding shame, the assertion is not true. To take a single instance. The charge which he brought against the poor girl Marion, whilst he was in the service of M. de la Roque, of stealing a ribbon which he had himself stolen, is not only spoken of in the language in which every one else would speak of it, as mean and diabolical; he not only describes with terrible minuteness her appeals to him to do her justice, and his own pertinacious lying;

Rousseau conscious of a sin.

he not only traces the act to its real and most ignominious source: but he declares, in language which bears internal witness of its veracity, that the image of the girl and of his slander haunts him continually; that it rises before him waking and sleeping; that he accepts, and trusts she will accept, all the sufferings he has undergone, all the misrepresentations to which he has been exposed from his fellows, as an imperfect expiation for it. No more fearful discovery of the undying worm of the conscience was ever made.

The permanence of the feeling.

And, since Rousseau believed in the immortality of his soul, *he* gives us no reason why what he had felt here he should ever cease to feel; why Marion should not mix with the dreams in that sleep which comes after the coil of mortality has been shaken off. Nor is it the least just to say that Rousseau is only submitting to a sham humiliation before the world's tribunal; that his stool of penitence is chosen so as not to sink him too low in the eyes of those whom he has chosen for his judges. He does not only, or even chiefly, speak of those deeds or conceptions which are regarded as evil by divines and stern moralists, and on which society at large bestows fair names. He records what is sure to degrade him in the opinion of all people; that which is voted base and detestable by persons who disclaim any high standard; the behaviour which they would be pleased to convict another of, as making themselves look whiter. The penance to which he submits is not a fantastic one, but a severer than any which any director ever enjoined. He may have reconciled himself to it. He may even have come to feel an insane pleasure in the exposure. Any man may do that in any kind of self-mental torture which he imposes upon himself; but the ignominy cannot be denied or explained away.

Rousseau submits to a real penance.

He was sure to incur social disgrace.

27. It is not in this respect, therefore, that Rousseau's *Confessions* depart from the model on which they are supposed to be formed. And when we consider how few and, in general, what affectionate and sympathizing readers would turn over the pages of the Bishop of Hippo, and what multitudes of keen, gloating, critical eyes would feed themselves with the delinquencies of the man who had quarrelled with his friends and almost declared war against his kind, it is impossible to say that the one submitted to a penalty from which the other shrank. But there is *this* difference, which must strike every one who fairly considers the two books, and reflects upon the impressions which he has received from them. Augustin, from the very first, confesses the presence of a loving and gracious Being, who is reading his heart, who is bringing his evils to light, who is seeking to deliver him from them; from whom he is trying to fly; who cares for him too much to let him have his way. That is what the mere reader of the letter of Augustin's book must find in it; that, as we endeavoured to show when we were treating it as an illustration of his mind and of the Christian philosophy of his century, is the essential spirit of it. To say that one finds *no* traces of a divine presence in this work of Rousseau would be wrong; it is haunted with the dim vision of a judge who is higher than human judges, nay, to whom there may be an appeal from them. The distinct censure which he passes on some of his own acts—still more upon some of his states of mind—is a recognition of such a judge. The terrible necessity of confession, like that

The real difference.

Rousseau's book implies a divine judge.

which compelled the "Ancient Mariner" to stay the bridegroom guests with his glittering eye, seems to us an unmistakable testimony that there is some one to whom he feels that he could pour out all his griefs and all his evil doings if only he could find him. *But he goeth by, and I see him not; he passeth me also, but I perceive him not.* The discovery of one to whom he could make all known, and who could separate between the light and darkness—the precious and the vile in him, who could justify him and clear his conscience from its own reproaches—this was wanting. And, therefore, the confused mass of thoughts, apprehensions, appetites, passions, within him lay muddled together. The one comprehensive abstraction, *Nature,* stood for them all. The good and evil, the filthy and the pure, all belonged to him; were they not all a part of himself? He knew in his heart that they were not. There must be a self—a great human self, of which they formed no part. The passions, thoughts, apprehensions, appetites, which God had given him were not those which inclined him to tell lies about poor Marion, or to commit any of the brutalities which his pen records. He was inwardly convinced that it could not be. But who could draw the line? He must rise above himself to be himself. Who could raise him above himself? He must find some one who hated his wrong and loved him. Was that the Parisian public? Was the power there which could make him a clean heart and renew a right spirit within him? He did not expect that, and he did not find it. But he did find in this Parisian public numbers who were in the same condition as himself—numbers for whom he could be the spokesman. They had tried those who were called confessors, and had found them vain, and had become weary of them. Those confessors had given them salves to their consciences, but no message how their consciences might be set free. The Genevese—coming from a land where confessors did not exist under that name, and where there was the same want of confession as elsewhere—from a land in which there was a tradition of a Being to whom confession might be made, who was faithful and just to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness—from a land where only the shadow of that Being remained, and where that shadow looked very distant and very dark,—could only proclaim the "Evangel" that men had got their natures, and must be as content with them as they could, and if they were not contented, but utterly discontented as he was, must try and find some consolation in proclaiming to the universe what they had done, and what they were. And this "Evangel" was believed, and became the substitute for one which, whether issuing from the pulpits of Paris or Geneva, appeared to put them even at a greater distance

But not one who actually divides the man from his evil.

The consequences to Rousseau's life.

Need of the supernatural for the sake of the natural

Priestly confession.

What Rousseau taught, and how it was believed.

from God than it did, to confound more hopelessly the just and the unjust, the false and the true.

The *Contrat Social.*

28. Fully to understand how the mind of Rousseau acted upon the public of France, how he developed the doctrines of Locke, how he prepared the way for the crisis that was at hand, we must turn for a moment to his other great book, the *Contrat Social.* Most of our readers will be aware that this work stands in more immediate relation to the events and the formulas of the French Revolution than all the books of all the philosophers who were born on the proper soil of France and under the Bourbon government. They will be aware that here lie the mysterious hints respecting liberty, equality, fraternity, which were to come forth in acts and principles of such mighty import; that here is the idea of something antecedent to all particular forms of government, subsisting under them all—not the ground of their existence in some former day, but of their continuous existence; that here are the maxims which led to the mingling of the three orders in one assembly, to the claim of the *Tiers Etat* to be the *Premier Etat,* or rather to be itself the only state; that here first the name Citizen is asserted to be the one for ordinary discourse; that here is the suggestion of the self-denying ordinance which made the experience of the members of the constituent assembly, such as it was, unavailing for the assembly which succeeded it; that here is expressed that distrust and scorn of representative assemblies which justified the continual interference of the mobs of Paris with their deliberations. Knowing this to be so, they will ask what there can be in such a treatise but the most direct and formal contradiction of the quiet Whiggism of Locke, the substitution of another maxim for the one from which he starts—one that, for good or for evil, must have reference to all countries equally, cannot be the least limited by the traditions of experiences of any country.

The phrases of the Revolution originate in it.

Rousseau not a cosmopolite.

29. In reference to this last point some injustice is often done to Rousseau. He had a set of cosmopolitan children no doubt; but he was not himself a cosmopolite. He disliked both the name and the thing. He was, as we have said, intensely individual. His studies on education led him to think much of the particular family. With respect to nations, he had far more sympathy with the lessons of Montesquieu, so far as they referred to the differences of climate and of traditions which called for different institutions, than with those of any of the philosophers. He disliked the philosophers for their affectation of a general humanity, for their indifference to special obligations. Above all, he was a citizen of Geneva—the citizen of a small republic. He expressly says that the more he read or saw of other institutions the more he preferred his own. And, whatever he might wish,

Acknowledges the difference of countries and climates.

he had no hope of seeing those institutions adopted by any large societies, least of all by an aged monarchy like that of France. "The greater part of nations," he says, "as of individual men, are only docile in their youth. They become incorrigible as they grow old. When once customs are established and prejudices rooted, it is a dangerous and vain enterprise to seek to reform them. The people cannot even suffer one to touch their evils for the purpose of destroying them; like dull and cowardly invalids, who groan at the sight of the physician." He admits that there have been cases of renovation through revolutions. Rome after the Tarquins was one instance; Holland and Switzerland in modern Europe had supplied two others. "But," he goes on, "these events are rare. They are exceptions, the reason of which may always be discovered in the particular constitution of the State which makes the exception. They could not even be repeated twice for the same people; for it may make itself free while it is only barbarous; it cannot when the spring of civilization is worn out. Then calamities may destroy it without revolutions being able to restore it. So soon as its chains are broken, it falls to pieces and exists no longer. Then it has need of a master, not of a deliverer. Free peoples remember this maxim. Liberty may be acquired, it can never be recovered." Again and again the author of the *Contrat Social* tell us that the practical application of his doctrine can only be in a small sphere. The following passage of his book is an instance. It may, perhaps, a century hence, be suspected as an interpolation, on account of its strange fulfilment in a sense so entirely different from that which the author intended:—"There is still in Europe one country capable of legislation; it is the isle of Corsica. The valour and the constancy with which that brave people has been able to recover and defend its liberty would deserve well that some wise man should teach it how to preserve its liberty. *I have a certain presentiment that one day this little island will astonish Europe.*"

Has little hope from a revolution in France.

A thorough Genevese.

Corsica.

Nevertheless, his principles are cosmopolitan.

30. But however little Rousseau may have intended or desired the decayed and corrupt body of French society to be that on which the experiment of his maxims was made, however strange and monstrous it might have seemed to him that France should soon claim the whole world to share in its recovered liberty, there was nothing in the principle which he set forth that could hinder this result. When Locke began to generalize about government, instead of merely defending the English revolution, or breaking in pieces the fiction of Filmer, he imagined a contract between the governors and the governed. If that contract was made in one place, it may have been made in

Locke's contract. any place. It had not more to do with Greece than with Palestine, with France than with England or with Germany. It had nothing to do, Rousseau said boldly, with any of them. There *was* no such contract; there could be no such contract anywhere or at any time. There were no parties between whom the contract could be made. The sovereigns were not distinct from the people. The people were the sovereigns. **Sovereignty of the people.** They could not abdicate that sovereignty. It belonged to them necessarily and inherently. Society was implied in the very existence of human beings. Governors were merely their instruments or delegates. Different governments might be suitable to different places. There were inconveniences in one, conveniences in another. Some were essentially bad, such as an hereditary aristocracy. A democracy had great advantages, but there was nothing to hinder the people from choosing an individual man to execute its decrees. But the government, **Government the instrument of the sovereign.** of whatever form it was, was to acknowledge this dominion, not as a mere reserved dominion, but as an actual one, which needed to come into continual exercise. That it might come into such exercise, that it never need be lost in a mere representation, Rousseau argued from the case of the Roman Comitia. In fact, the Roman constitution became, in a way which seems strange to us in our time, the great pattern and justification of all his maxims. So that, besides the other peculiarities of the revolution which we may trace to him, all its classical pedantries, its adoption of the forms of an aristocratical commonwealth and the names of great aristocratical leaders in the **His lessons from Roman history.** denunciation of aristocrats, may also plead his authority. He read, no doubt, Roman history with the eyes of a Swiss—with the eyes of one who was the son of a tradesman, and of one who had himself been brought up to a trade. The equality which belonged to the circumstances of a small city, and which grew dearer to him the more he perceived of the complications and corruptions of great cities, entered almost unconsciously into his conception of society, coloured his judgment of the past as well as his anticipation of the future. All that Montesquieu or that others had said of the way in which the strifes of orders had contributed to the preservation of liberty made no impression upon him. Liberty, he readily acknowledged, must be obedience to a law, not the power of breaking it. But the disposition to break laws, as well as to establish laws which should bind one class and not another, arose, he supposed, from the inequality **Equality.** of ranks and conditions. Own the whole people as the Sovereign assume the whole people to be the legislators, declare those who execute them to be its subjects, and what room is there for inequality? Or if it invades us, must not our first object be to crush it, and to restore the proper order of Nature?

Fraternity.

31. It must be evident that the primary idea of the *Contrat Social* implies a state of manners as well as of laws. *Emile* must come in to help in forming our society. The people constitute a unity, but it is composed of elements which must be taught to cohere: the object is to take away whatever hinders them from cohering as they naturally should. *Fraternity*, then, is as necessary to us as equality. We must be a family of brothers or we cannot be the monarch. But *paternity* we have cast away. In theory Locke had done that for us already. Rousseau observes that if there was a grant of dominion to Adam or to Noah, it may, for aught he knows, have descended upon him: he can make out as good a title to be the king of the world as any one else. That form of the doctrine, then, had become a jibe; it was almost too old for a jibe, the edge was so entirely worn off. But theocracy, as a practical conception, as a power not vested in kings but in priests, was not extinguished anywhere; certainly not in France. The main efforts of the philosophers were, we have seen, directed to the extinction of it. Rousseau, not working with them, not using their weapons, but, for the most part, indignantly rejecting them, yet strikes a more deadly blow at their enemy than they have struck. They only try to undermine the throne. He at once provides a successor to it. The idea of the sovereignty of the people takes the place of the theocratic idea. Beneath all governments, having a right to displace all, treating all as its offspring and its subjects, stands this mysterious dominion, in itself awful, intangible, unapproachable; but able to take form, and to come forth not in the decrees of conclaves or of councils, but in the decrees of clubs and of St. Antoine mobs, enforced by all the instruments which they can command. This is the Rousseau conception. The acts in which it speedily embodied itself were such as would have shocked him perhaps as much as any man—such as he would have thought the most flagrant outrages upon the names which he had proclaimed to the world, and upon the principles which those names represented. Men who took part in those acts may have often felt the same. They may have wondered at what they were doing under the authority of the blessed symbols to which they were appealing. But they could always fall back, they did fall back, upon the question, Who is lord over us? We are sovereign, Who can be above us? Tell us what law there is which we did not create, and which can bind us.

Ideas of paternal government rejected.

Rousseau a greater enemy of the priests than the Encyclopedists.

Realization of his maxim.

32. In the latter part of the *Contrat Social*, Rousseau passes

Rousseau's view of different religions in their relation to the State.

under review the different religious conceptions which have sought to blend themselves with the government and order of a State. He finds those of the old world in a certain degree helpful and sustaining to the order of the commonwealth. He admires greatly the legislation of the Hebrews. He commends all the great lawgivers who have said that their laws did not proceed from themselves but from the gods. He does not even vehemently object to their exclusiveness, so far as they connected the god who presided over the city or country with the defence of the city or country. It is the idea of a kingdom of heaven which has come in with the Gospel that has utterly puzzled all social relations. Taking the form which it has taken among the Catholics, it is enslaving to all thought and action. It mingles itself with the affairs of life only to confuse them, to enforce hypocrisy, to compel men to hate and punish all who do not think as they do. Taking the form which it has taken among those who try to separate it from the affairs of the world, it makes those affairs, and the right pursuit of them, things of indifference. It sets men's minds wholly upon another economy; it makes them useless or bad citizens. In neither of these forms, then, can Christianity have any relation with the true social contract. There are certain duties and obligations which must be prescribed to men, certain moral articles, which will often coincide with the precepts of the Gospel, that must be enforced upon them. There must be no persecution for opinions; but if people are found guilty of doing acts, or even of holding principles which interfere with their obligations as citizens, they may be punished for these. Nay, Rousseau intimates very clearly that those who hold strong religious convictions, if they interfere with the convictions of others, must be cut off from the State.

The kingdom of heaven under its two conceptions.

Toleration.

33. In this last lesson we have the climax of the *Essay on Toleration*, as we had before the climax of the *Essay on Government*. It appears to leave us much where we were before. Under the name of *Incivisme* any crimes of thought or belief may be punished which priests have punished under another name. The Roman emperors did not punish the preachers of the kingdom of heaven for their religion; they punished them for interfering with the authority of the Cæsar—because the disciples of the Crucified proclaimed a king who reigned by a different title, and who exhibited his power in different acts from his. The new Sovereign need only follow the precedent—would, in fact, be obliged to follow it, if he found men of one faith or another rebellious to his decrees. It is in vain to allege against such a doctrine the uncertainty of human opinions, the likelihood that one may be as right as another.

A new defence of persecution for opinions.

"Opinions! We enforce no opinions. We merely crush intolerance. Your zeal for certain opinions interferes with the peace of society—with the safety of the one and indivisible republic. Are we not bound, in the name of liberty of opinion, to put you down?"

34. In fact, it is obvious that the seed of a universal society, claiming all the rights which any old universal society imperial or ecclesiastical had claimed, lay in this idea of Rousseau. And if it was there, it could not long remain an idea; it must have a trial in act. Rousseau rather feared than desired that trial; neither he nor his opponents could avert it. Those perversions of the idea of a kingdom of heaven which he exposed had become too flagrant and monstrous; it must be seen whether *this* was the substitute for them. If it was found for a time to be a very tremendous substitute, there might be a revival of those former experiments with some prospect of success. And perhaps at last, through their failure, as well as through a cry on the part of Rousseau's one and all-sufficient sovereign for some one to direct his movements, might come forth the discovery of a kingdom of heaven which neither treats the doings of earth as indifferent, nor attempts to mould them according to the conception of certain earthly governors, regal or sacerdotal; which sets up no fatherhood on earth, but is grounded on an actual relation between men and a Father in heaven; which upholds all special forms of government that are suitable to the circumstances and traditions of each nation; which makes redemption or deliverance from bondage its watchword and its ruling idea; which, so far as it prevails, must always be carrying that redemption into act in some fresh sphere of life, in some new region; which must be always awakening new thoughts, bringing new powers into exercise; which forbids intolerance, not because it looks upon truth as uncertain, but because it stands in a God of truth, who is bringing into unity the different living elements of faith which He has scattered among the generations of men, and is emancipating them from the dead conceits, superstitions, idolatries, which are generated in their selfish natures, and which set them at war with each other. If the *Contrat Social*, as well as the *Emile*, have removed obstacles to the revelation of this kingdom—if their confusions suggest it, and show the necessity of it—if the mighty events of which they were the precursors turn it, as well as what is opposed to it, from a dream into a reality,—what heartlessness and faithlessness to dread the effects of any inquiries or speculations, even of those tremendous political convulsions, "which shake not earth only, but also heaven!"

Rousseau's Catholic Church and Pope.

Another idea of the kingdom of heaven

Theories and events contributing to it.

35. There is a dread, and, we must confess, a more reasonable

dread, of a class of writings which trace their parentage, not to the *Emile* or the *Contrat Social*, but to the *Nouvelle Héloise.* An apologist for Rousseau might allege that there are in him elements of nobleness which were entirely wanting in the sentimental spawn that was produced from him; that a free Alpine air breathes through his voluptuousness, which was exchanged in them for the faint, sickly perfumes of Parisian boudoirs. No doubt this is so; but it must be also remembered that the profanation of powers such as his, of aspirations such as his, to any kind of evil purposes, involves a degradation and a shame which we cannot feel equally in the imitators. To judge him or them is no business of ours. The *Confessions* have told us how impossible he found it to separate what he felt and knew to be evil in him from those passions and instincts which he was sure were God's gifts and must be good. That confusion was sure to go into all his pictures of life. Nature must come out in them as a medley of impressions which no keen, clear eye discriminates, before which the man passively succumbs. It is the Nemesis of this nature-worship that from it arose the most artificial, the most insincere of all schools. What was genuine in it, whether of reverence for the outward world or of sympathy with man, would be sure to bear other fruits, which would ripen in a different climate.

The *Nouvelle Héloise.*

The sentimental school.

Relation of this school to the philosophical school of sensation.

36. For our subject, the most important reflection which is suggested by the school to which we have referred is, that there is an evident and close alliance between the doctrine of sensation in philosophy and the prevalence of sentiment in literature. If by this remark we were understood to mean that a strong assertion of the opinion that our ideas are derived from sensation must have a tendency to sentimentalism, it could be most easily refuted. No one had less of this tendency than Locke; there are few traces of it in Hartley; we are not aware that there is any excuse for attributing it to Condillac. Just so far as writers were occupied with continuous mental investigations, they had a security against that weakness; Locke, at least, had the further security of engagement in the common business of a particularly unsentimental country and age. But the contemporaries of philosophers are affected by their thoughts otherwise than they are affected themselves. Their school language must be translated into the language of the parlour—by and bye, also, of the kitchen—and, as is wont to be the case, the translation often looks very unlike the original. The necessity of submission to the senses is the world's version of the doctrine that we receive everything through our senses. It may be an unfair version; at all events, it never can be urged in opposition to any ascertained facts. But it may compel the inquiry, whether

The philosophers themselves free from sentimentalism.

nothing has been left out in the scheme which seemed so complete and satisfactory. Good we have seen coming to education from the method of Locke; good we may see coming from it in various directions. But we may still have to begin again "at the wrong end," that we may learn how that good may be secured to us—how the mischiefs which accompany it may be avoided.

Need of a philosophy for its cure.

37. We might linger long over the period of French philosophy which preceded the Revolution. But we have been careful to select only the names of those (1.) Who had an acknowledged indisputable influence over their contemporaries; (2.) Who exercised that influence in different ways so as to be distinct specimens of classes; (3.) Who cannot be denied by those that draw the sharpest line between the physical and the moral philosopher—between the philosopher as such and the man of letters—to be fit subjects for a review of ethical and metaphysical writers. All whom we have noticed fulfil these conditions. No set of men living in the same time, and having certain objects in common, can be more dissimilar than Condillac, Helvetius, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau. However high may be the claims of two out of the five to rank as dramatists or novelists, no one can refuse to treat the *Lettres sur les Anglais,* or *Emile* and the *Contrat Social* as critical works in strict philosophical history. All may have treated largely of the connection of man with nature, but none would be ranked among writers on nature in the technical sense. About their effect on the minds of their own countrymen, and of foreigners likewise, there is no dispute. And Voltaire represents in his own person, and in the variety of his gifts and pursuits, the general effect which *L'Encyclopedie* was designed to produce, and did produce. Condillac is an advantageous and admirable type of the school which reduced all humanity to sensation. Helvetius is the link between a man so purely and practically self-seeking as Rochefoucauld and those who aimed at the substitution of a general utility for the selfishness of classes and individuals. Montesquieu contains in himself the germ of a race of historical jurists. Rousseau, though nought but himself can be his parallel, yet is the first in a series of educational reformers—the precursor of countless tribes of sentimentalists and confessors (in the modern acceptation of that title), the originator of a set of symbols which denote the character of a mighty epoch.

Titles to leadership in French philosophy.

They must bear an individual character.

They must not be mere men of letters or naturalists.

Types of classes.

38. We must now pass from France into Scotland—from Rousseau to David Hume. The relation between these two eminent men forms itself a curious chapter in the philosophical history of the eighteenth century—an illustration of the characters and dispositions of each, and of the time to which they

David Hume (1711-1776).

Rousseau's different judgments of him.

belonged. In February, 1763, Rousseau longs to reach the soil which has given birth to Hume, to whom he has done no justice, in that he has only admired his genius; his heart deserved far higher raptures. In June, 1766, he says, "You bring me to England apparently to procure me an asylum, really to disgrace me. You devote yourself to this noble task with a zeal worthy of your heart, and with an art worthy of your talents. . . . You live in the great world, I in solitude. The public has to be deceived, and you are made to deceive it. I know, however, one man whom you will not deceive; it is yourself." These changes of opinion in a man of Rousseau's temperament are not the least surprising; if his second thoughts detract anything from Hume's amenity and good nature, the earlier are far worthier of confidence. In fact, those qualities were probably one cause of the alienation of the friends. It is hard to imagine so fiery and so calm a nature even for a time harmonizing; that they should soon discover their essential repugnance, and cannot seriously affect our opinion of either. Hume may or may not be correctly described as living in the "great world" of England or Scotland. But there was that in his easy nonchalance and contentment which would be eventually as sure to win him favour in that world, or in any smaller world, as the exactions and capriciousness of Rousseau would be to offend it.

Opposition of their characters.

Hume's autobiography.

39. The short account of "My Own Life," which is prefixed to the *History of England*, conveys as much information about Hume's circumstances as the reader requires, and is, on the whole, a more faithful picture of him than any external biographer, favourable or unfavourable, could supply. There is simplicity and no extravagant vanity in the following report:—"I am, or rather was (for that is the style I must use in speaking of myself, which emboldens me the more to speak my sentiments)—I was, I say, a man of mild disposition, of command of temper, of an open, social, and cheerful humour, capable of attachment, but little susceptible of enmity, and of great moderation in all my passions. Even my love of literary fame, my ruling passion, never soured my temper, notwithstanding my frequent disappointments. My company was not unacceptable to the young and careless as well as to the studious and the literary; and as I took a particular pleasure in the company of modest women I had no reason to be displeased with the reception I met with from them. In a word, though most men anywise eminent have found reason to complain of calumny, I never was touched, or even attacked by her baleful tooth; and though I wantonly exposed myself to the rage of both civil and religious factions, they seemed to be disarmed in my behalf of their

Account of his own character

Visit to France.

It fixed his course of life.

His works.

The history of the Stuart period.

wonted fury." The facts of the autobiography illustrate and confirm these statements. It represents him as early addicted to polite literature, as destined by his parents for the law, but as devoting himself to Cicero and Virgil when they supposed he was occupied with Voet and Vinnius. For a little while he tried commerce at Bristol, but he did not care for money. A visit to France in 1734 determined his course of life. He found that the independence he possessed would suffice to a man of small desires and careful economy: he would "regard every object as contemptible except the improvement of his talents in literature." He spent three years in France; there he began his philosophical speculations; there he wrote his *Treatise on Human Nature.* How dear this country was to him we learn afterwards when he went to Paris with Lord Hertford in 1763. There he was "loaded with civilities by men and women of all ranks and stations." He found "it a real satisfaction to live in Paris from the great number of sensible, knowing, polite company with which that city abounded above all places in the universe." He thought of settling there for life. He had, however, in the interval between these visits, formed ties with his own country. He had fixed in Edinburgh in 1751, published his *Political Discourses* and his *Principles of Morals,* which, he says, he preferred to all his books; in 1752, became librarian to the Faculty of Advocates, and commenced his *History.* He records good humouredly those literary disappointments to which he alludes in his sketch of his own character. He chose to begin his *History* with the accession of the House of Stuart—"the epoch when he thought the misrepresentations of factions began chiefly to take place." He was "assailed with one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation," all because "he presumed to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles the First and the Earl of Strafford." Two archbishops—odd exceptions, he thinks, to the general rule—sent him messages not to be discouraged. Shortly after he published his *Natural History of Religion,* which was attacked by Dr. Hurd, and his volume on *The Reign of the Tudors,* which was less unpopular than that on the Stuarts. The latter he revised, but instead of correcting it to please "the senseless clamour of the Whigs," who had all places to bestow in the State and in literature, he made "about a hundred alterations all on the Tory side." He had not acted so foolishly for his pecuniary interests as he at first imagined. "The copy-money given me by the booksellers even exceeded anything formerly known in England. I became not only independent but opulent." At sixty-five "he saw many symptoms of his literary reputation breaking out with additional lustre."

Inferences from this narration.

40. This, the reader may say, is not the portrait of that subtle reasoner who is supposed to have carried scepticism to its farthest possible limits. This is assuredly no laborious questioner of facts or pursuer of principles. He is the very model of the agreeable man who mixes the pursuit of light literature with the intercourse of society, who is never likely to trouble us with any perplexing or deep investigations, by whom we might rather hope to be emancipated from all such, whom we might ask to protect us from the tiresome pedants that would force us into them. Such an impression Hume undoubtedly conveys of himself in this record of his own life. And it is not different from the impression which he seeks to produce, nay which he actually produces, on us in the works in which we should expect to find the counteraction of it. In the opening of his *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding* he contrasts what he calls the "easy and obvious philosophy" with "the accurate and abstruse." "Abstract reasoners," he says, "seem hitherto to have enjoyed only a momentary reputation from the caprice or ignorance of their own age, but have not been able to support their renown with more equitable posterity. . . . The fame of Cicero flourishes at present; but that of Aristotle is utterly decayed. La Bruyère passes the seas and still maintains his reputation; but the glory of Malebranche is confined to his own nation and to his own age; and Addison, perhaps, will be read with pleasure when Locke shall be entirely forgotten." It will be seen that such statements are strictly in harmony with those of the biography; they do not refer to "abstract" thinkers of one school, but of all schools; they include Locke, who was himself a man of the world; they evidently denote a habit of mind which he who cherishes it is not likely to abandon, to whatever topics he may happen to direct his attention. If he possesses any faculty which enables him to analyze skillfully and with subtlety, we may be sure he will exercise it; his ruling passion for literary fame will not allow a gift to be idle which may bring in great returns of reputation in proportion to its rarity. But it will be used in subordination to the main purpose; not to show how much can be done by painful investigations in obscure regions, but how little can be done: not to distress "sensible, knowing, and polite companies" of men and women with the notion that there is something which they might know, and ought to know, besides what is contained in their easy books; but for the purpose of relieving them from all such distress, of making them comfortable with the thought that any aspirations to rise above that region in which they are habitually conversant are extravagant and ridiculous.

Confirmed by his philosophical treatises.

The easy and abstract philosophy.

The latter subordinate to the former.

41. That a young Scotchman should have proposed to himself

this object may appear to us surprising. But, as we have already remarked, he was a Scotchman whose mind was shaped in France at the very epoch when this idea of philosophy was beginning to establish itself there and to displace every other—at the very time when Voltaire was borrowing the arms of Locke to overthrow the "abstract" philosophy which had reigned in his country up to that time. If we have mastered the sense which he and his disciples gave to the word—if we remember how contemptuous he was to all previous philosophers of all ages—how much he valued Locke because he limited the exercises of the reason, and exposed its pretensions to deal with subjects which were out of its ken—we shall understand how a man who reckoned Paris the chosen city of the universe may have caught his tone and adopted his nomenclature; nay, how much more piquant that tone and that nomenclature may have been to him because they belonged to the age and did not belong to his own soil. So far Hume was not original. He followed French guides—certainly not his unfortunate Swiss *protégé*—in seeking to connect philosophy with the life and manners of a civilized fashionable circle. He followed them in their desire to remove whatever obstacles hindered the accomplishment of this union. He followed them in regarding theocratic notions—the belief in an interference of God with the affairs of men—as the chief of these obstacles. In the method of working out this common object there was scope for the greatest differences of character and of intellect. There was at least as much theocracy in Scotland as in France. But it was of an entirely different kind. And the process of undermining it was correspondingly different. No instruments which were set in motion by the Encyclopedists were better fitted for their purpose than those which Hume set at work for his. They are as unlike as the natures for which they were devised were unlike. Both kinds derived all possible advantage from their own sharpness, from the skill of the hands which wielded them, from the weakness of much that was opposed to them. We believe that there is good reason for contentment and thankfulness that no blundering interference was allowed to make the trial of their force less complete.

Hume's French discipline.

Enters into Voltaire's idea of philosophy.

Aims like them at the extinction of all theocratic notions as interfering with social comfort.

Applies his wisdom to Scotland.

42. Students of Hume are wont to commit two mistakes. They separate the philosopher from the historian. They regard the *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding* as exhibiting more of his purpose, because it unquestionably exhibits much more of his dialectical ability, than the *Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals*, which he regarded as his best book. If we fall into the first error we shall understand him neither as an importer of a French style of thought and literature into Scotland nor as

The *History* of Hume cannot be divided from his philosophy.

Principles of the new philosophical history.

Hume's selection of the Stuart period as his starting-point.

He hates the Covenanters at least as much as he loves Charles.

Strikes at the root of the theocratic faith in Scotland.

The opposition to his scheme temporary.

Toryism becoming predominant.

a native Scotchman. Voltaire aimed at nothing so much as to make history what he called philosophical: in other words, to make it the reflex of the temper of his own time; to take from it all that implied a reverence for antiquity—all that could favour the theocratic temper. A clear, free, popular style was indispensable for this purpose; it was equally indispensable that if he shocked some old prejudices by striking at names which mingled faith with freedom, like Joan of Arc, he should make compensation for this violence by favouring the national admiration for great monarchs, like Louis XIV.; only suggesting how much they lowered their greatness when they fell under the dominion of priests. Hume undertook English history in the same spirit. But he was not an Englishman; he belonged to the country which had produced the Stuarts and the Covenanters. The period of the accession of James the First was the one in which the great theocratic conflict began. Hume had, no doubt, "a generous tear" ready for Charles I. and Strafford. He might have an old Stuart leaning; and though Strafford must have been far too strong for his good-natured equanimity, he could not but admire a man so thoroughly anti-puritan as he was. But with all respect for Hume's tenderness, we conceive his antipathies were in this instance the quickeners of his sympathies. It was the moment of history to select for the trial of the new doctrines and the new historical method. None could have answered the purpose nearly so well. Whatever theocratic faith remained in Scotland clung to the traditions of this time. There was also a faith in Scotland which clung to the traditions of the exiled family, which, defeated of all present hope, still longed to justify the past. No doubt there were strong Whig feelings in England as well as Scotland, which still connected the Bill of Rights with the Petition of Rights; the opposition to Charles and the bishops with the establishment of the constitution. Whilst the memory of Prestonpans was still recent, such recollections must have had no little power. With them was combined the habitual presbyterianism of Hume's country, and a certain reluctance among the Episcopalians of ours to acknowledge a champion who evidently deemed very lightly of the faith which they and their opponents professed in common. We need not therefore wonder at the torrent of opposition which these volumes are said to have excited at their first appearance, nor at the temporary neglect of them which succeeded it. These are often prognostics of a triumph; seldom of a triumph so rapid and so splendid as in this instance. The Bute ascendency was at hand; the encouragement of the "two odd exceptions" was a sign of the coming time. Toryism was mounting into the ascendant; Toryism—it must be said in plain terms—which for the present had not the least objection to a left-handed marriage with Atheism. There were two Tories of another type in the land, whose rough voices were heard after awhile forbiding the banns—George III. and Dr. Johnson. But those voices did not prevent Hume's history from penetrating into every class-room—from becoming the text-book out of which boys were to be instructed in the deeds and purposes of their forefathers. Clergymen thought it necessary to confute Hume's *Essays* in angry answers which were not read. Clergymen carefully indoctrinated their pupils in the maxims of a history which embodies the spirit of the essays, which teaches us, far more effectually than they can teach us, to believe in a world that is governed by no God, and which is inhabited by a race of men who are capable of no patriotism, no heroism, no self-sacrifice, but have made a ridiculous mimicry of those qualities, to impose upon each other. The French Revolution, which made so many respectable church-goers, might have weakened the power of such a book. But the analogy between Louis XVI. and Charles I. gave a sacredness to Hume's "generous tear," and convinced Anti-Jacobins that the enemy of freedom must be a defender of the faith.

Hume's *History* becomes a great instrument of forming Englishmen.

43. The other mistake to which we alluded is less serious than this; but it confuses our judgment of a very remarkable man. In his *Principles of Morals* Hume refers all virtues—such as justice, benevolence, forgiveness, as well as all political order—to *utility*. It is a book written—as every book of his must be written—easily and agreeably. The question is settled with less labour, and, on the whole, with less range of thought and observation than Helvetius had brought to bear upon it. But it is free from much that gives offence in the treatise of Helvetius. Rochefoucauld is almost out of sight. There are far fewer complaints of existing habits and institutions. To us, reading this book in the present day, it seems a little stale. The arguments, however well stated, have done so much service since, that we are inclined to talk of them as used up. This, however, is only because they have become so much a part of our common furniture—because they have been so readily accepted by the divines who have undertaken to answer all that we suppose is exceptionable in Hume—because at least one of our universities has, under another name than Hume's, given them a learned and ecclesiastical sanction. We may have become a little weary of these solutions of moral puzzles; they are too familiar—too orthodox. Problems may have started up before us which, we suspect, they do not entirely meet. We ought to place ourselves in the position of men in the eighteenth century—as far as we can in Hume's own position—then we shall understand

Hume's *Principles of Morals*.

Hume's utilitarianism has received grave sanction.

how exactly this book answers to his description of that easy and obvious philosophy which the more difficult and abstract, having no value of its own, might be serviceable in corroborating and protecting against any theocratic invasions. It being shown that all moral virtues have a great utility, and *may* be referred to that as their ground—it being shown that all writers on ethics have recognized this quality in them, however they may have differed in other respects,—all suggestions from older philosophers which interfere with the notion that this quality is the adequate explanation of them having been dismissed with those graceful shrugs, those modest appeals to our utter ignorance of principles and final causes which no one manages so well as Hume;—the idea of any immutable laws or principles vanishes almost without an effort. The student simply smiles, and asks himself, "Where did I ever get the dream of such? What a fool I must have been that such a dream should come to me!" Before his readers were prepared to utter such a speech their dreams must have been haunted with many nightmares, perhaps with some spectres. They must have been for a long time suspecting that the world which they did not converse with through their eyes and ears was a mere phantom world. They must have been wishing, or half-wishing, for some one to lay the phantoms. A large portion of those polite men and women to whom Hume especially addressed himself were in this condition. They had begun to think that whatever did not come to them through the senses was a delusion. The philosophy of half-a-century had been adapting itself to that opinion, and had been justifying it. How welcome must be the teacher who comes forth to convince men that they have not been mistaken in it—that they were only mistaken in all the opinions which prevented them from frankly accepting it!

Nature of Hume's arguments.

Certain to be acceptable to a multitude of readers.

44. Now, then, let the abstruse philosophy do its best. Hume regards it with the indifference of a gentleman who cares only for polite literature and a quiet life. Still, if he chooses to exercise himself in this line, he can show that very few of those who profess abstract philosophy can pursue it as successfully as he does. And it was not merely the "ruling passion" which was gratified by his display of his power in what he affected to treat as a mere idle, unnecessary exercise. It seems to us that the *Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding* has been fruitful of important consequences to philosophy as such, to theology, to human life. No book bears such striking witness to the consolatory fact that a man's highest gift, when it is stretched to its utmost, will ultimately confer benefits upon his kind, even if the immediate purpose which he pro-

Hume in the character of an abstract philosopher.

Benefits of a real exercise of any heaven-bestowed gift.

poses to himself in the use of it is ever so poor a one. Or may we not try to educe a more cheering lesson even than this from the case before us? Is it not probable that a man, when he is exercising his highest faculty, is carried above himself—that he unconsciously forgets the low result after which he is striving, or only sees it at a distance in the background—that truth becomes his aim, and that let him be what he may—sceptic, dogmatist, utilitarian—he must bow and bring offerings to her shrine which may hereafter prove more effectual than all the offerings that he has brought to other shrines — which may draw down blessings as great as the curses that have followed them? From the book of Hume's which contains his doctrine of Cause and Effect and his *Essay on Miracles*—from the book, therefore, which he thought, and which his opponents have thought, the most sceptical of all his books—lessons, we think, may be learnt, nay, have been learnt, which have been the best confutation of the lazy scepticism that possessed him, and that his history has diffused through our land. It is not when he is pushing his investigations as far as they will go that we ever complain of him; *then* he is doing a service to truth and to mankind. It is when, as happens often in this treatise, he declines investigation, laughs at the effort to make it as useless and ridiculous, flings himself into his arm chair, becomes as indolently and contemptuously acquiescent as any priest ever wished his disciples to be; it is then that he exhibits the state of mind to which we are all tempted, and against which, whatever others do, the believer in a God of truth must wrestle to the death.

Hume's philosophy never pushed too far.

He has done harm only by cultivating laziness.

Hume on Locke.

45. Beginning from the doctrine that our ideas are only copies of our sensible impressions, Hume dismisses, with something like contempt, the chapter of Locke from which his own philosophy and all the philosophy of the day had taken its start. The controversy about "innate ideas" seems to him a merely scholastical one. If innate means natural, of course our ideas are innate. We receive them into us; they become a part of us; we have the capacity for receiving them. The meaning of Locke was, he admits, probably that which *he* has expressed in simpler and more correct language. All abstract ideas must then be only feeble representations of those impressions from which they are derived; and you may get rid of "metaphysical jargon" by always asking respecting any word which is put forth as the expression of an abstract idea, "To what impression does it correspond?" If no answer can be returned, you may conclude that your teacher is playing off a trick upon you—that he is giving you a word which stands for nothing. So far we have not learnt anything which any well-trained scholar of Locke

The controversy about innate ideas obsolete.

Impressions and their copies.

might not have told us; we have only swept the ground of some of those dreams of "being" which still cling to men who are most anxious to scatter them. Our obligation to Hume, so far, is only that he makes us understand more clearly than we did before that we are not in direct contact with reality, but only with "impressions." It is something, however, to be perfectly assured on *what* ground we are standing. The next step is to trace the connection between those ideas which are the copies of the impressions. On this point Hume has not nearly so much to tell us as we have already learnt from Hartley. The vibrations and vibratiuncles did not commend themselves to him; they would have sounded strange to the polite companies with which he associated. He assigns, however, three principles of association which need not interfere with them—*Contiguity*, *Resemblance*, *Cause* or *Effect*. The author is not anxious to prove that this enumeration is exhaustive. It would be very inconsistent with his purpose and his principle to attempt such a proof, even to suppose that there could be such a one. He will only show, by a number of instances, "the effects of the connection upon the passions and imagination, where we may open up a field of speculation more entertaining, and perhaps more instructive, than the other." The instances are taken from works of art. The rules of art, as Hume understood them, are traced to the association of ideas. Contiguity, resemblance, causation, can be shown to be connected with the books we read, the pictures we see, and with the pleasure which remains on our mind after we have read and seen. To pursue the subject further Hume thought unnecessary. He did not, however, in this case wish to quell inquiry. He "threw together his loose hints to excite the curiosity of philosophers, and beget a suspicion, if not a full persuasion, that the subject is very copious." He has been gratified. The curiosity has been excited. There has not been a suspicion, but a full persuasion that the subject is far more copious than he supposed it to be.

Association of ideas.

The three principles.

Hume's æsthetics.

They excite inquiry.

Sceptical doubts (section 4 of the *Inquiry*).

46. Thus far we seem only to have been at play. Now comes what, if we were speaking of any one but Hume, we might call the tug of war. For now we have reached the section of the *Inquiry* which contains *sceptical doubts concerning the operation of the understanding*—the one in which the whole question is to be discussed, "What is the nature of the evidence which assures us of any real existence of matters of fact beyond the testimony of our senses and the record of our memory?" It is a serious examination surely. We brace ourselves to it as if it had something to do with our very existence. We are soon quieted. It is to be no tug of war at all. "This

Works, vol. iv., p. 33, ed. Edinburgh, 1826.

Consequences of this inquiry.

part of philosophy, it is observable, has been little cultivated either by the ancients or the moderns; and therefore our doubts and errors in the prosecution of so important an inquiry may be more excusable, while we march through such difficult paths without any guide or direction. They may even prove useful by exciting curiosity and destroying that implicit faith and security which is the bane of all reasoning and free inquiry. The discovery of defects in the common philosophy, if any such there be, will not, I presume, be a discouragement, but rather an incitement to attempt something that is more full and satisfactory than has yet been proposed to the public." We have said already that we have no doubt these effects, and greater effects than these, were to follow from Hume's examination. But they were to follow precisely because men engaged in it to whom it was not such a matter of indifference as it was to him—who were quite willing that he should shake their implicit faith and their dependence on the common philosophy; but who did not choose, when these had been shaken to their great benefit, to dangle between heaven and earth, with no footing on either, only because polite gentlemen and ladies might find that position a safe and comfortable one for them.

Works, vol. iv., p. 40.

Experience

47. The following passage contains the inward doctrine of the book, and is so characteristic, that we should be wronging the author and wasting the time of the reader if we gave it in any other language than his:—" When it is asked, *What is the nature of all our reasonings concerning matters of fact?* the proper answer seems to be, that they are founded on the relation of cause and effect. When, again, it is asked, *What is the foundation of all reasonings and conclusions concerning that relation?* it may be replied in one word, EXPERIENCE. But if we still carry on our sifting humour, and ask, *What is the foundation of all conclusions from experience?* this implies a new question, which may be of more difficult solution and explication. Philosophers that give themselves airs of superior wisdom and sufficiency have a hard task when they encounter persons of inquisitive dispositions, who push them from every corner to which they retreat, and who are sure at last to bring them to some dangerous dilemma. The best expedient to prevent this confusion is to be modest in our pretensions, and even to discover the difficulty before it is presented to us. By this means we make a kind of merit of our very ignorance." Most entirely does Hume fulfil the intention which he has announced in this paragraph. Having reached the answer to his second question, he not only declares, but proves by the most satisfactory induction, that he can, upon his ground, give no answer to the third. An experience grounded upon sensible impressions cannot con-

The idea of cause.

Practical scepticism not to be feared.

Abstract scepticism desirable.

Works, vol. iv., p. 190, section on academical or sceptical philosophy.

Probability, section vi., pp. 67-70.

duct to the idea of any ultimate *power* or *cause*. It can only set forth a train of antecedents and consequents. The ideas are linked together in our minds by bonds of contiguity and resemblance. There is a necessary connection between them. There appears to be a corresponding connection in nature itself. Those who are interested about final causes may dwell upon this connection—may find great entertainment in tracing it. But the notion that they find any ground of this connection either in the outward world or in their own minds is mere delusion. They assume it; they do not find it. How the thought comes to us that we want it need not perplex us. It is just the point about which we can be content to remain in ignorance. We can do our work perfectly well without it. The business of society will proceed though this point remains always unsettled. All moral principles, we have seen already, have their own sufficient basis in convenience and utility. There is abundant security against practical Pyrrhonism in the demands which every day's existence makes upon us. What harm can there be in the academic doubt which merely refers to points of abstract philosophy? If the multitude wants a faith in some invisible cause or power to keep it quiet and well behaved, we may be sure that it will have what it wants. Superstition will always provide terrors enough. Why should abstract philosophy, which indeed has nothing to do with them, be called in to sustain them? Let it simply confess that reason cannot apprehend a cause, if reason be, as we have proved it to be, merely experience deduced from sensible impressions. The best course is to lay down the rule, that "the only object of the abstract sciences or of demonstration are quantity and number, and that all attempts to extend this more perfect species of knowledge beyond these bounds are mere sophistry and illusion." Probability, then, is left by Hume, as by Butler, for the whole region of morals. But to what different uses may the same word be turned! The probability of Hume is merely a preponderance of chances for one conclusion over another. Because morals are subjected to probability they can have no connection with an invisible world, which lies wholly beyond our guesses. Butler sees his probability in the facts of the world around him, all of which being unsatisfactory in themselves, are to him traces and footmarks leading to an invisible world, the existence of which they demand, in which they can find their only explanation.

Hume's argument on cause and effect conclusive.

48. Hume's modesty, becoming as it is, carried him too far, if it induced him only to claim likelihood or probability for his argument about cause and effect. It was, and so he felt it in his secret heart, an entirely conclusive demonstration. Starting

from his premises, he showed that it was *impossible* to arrive at the belief of a cause. If that belief is lodged somewhere in men's minds—if there has been a demand for it which abstract philosophy has sought by unfair ways to account for—then abstract philosophy must try what it can do in some other way, or must leave a fact unexplained which will be a fact whether it can find the explanation or no. Hume has brought us to this point. We cannot be too thankful for being brought to it by any process. His *Essay on Miracles*, which, as we have said, forms a part of this treatise, helps to show us something more of the nature of that fact, and therefore helps to clear the way for any solution that may be found of it. It is part of Hume's business—a main step in his argument—to show us how strong the feeling about miracles has been in all countries and in all ages. The Protestant Christian wishes to draw a line about the miracles of the New Testament; to suppose that there is some evidence in favour of them which cannot be produced for others. But see, he says, what evidence there is for the Jansenist miracles in our own day! How strongly a subtle genius like Pascal was convinced of the truth of some of the earliest of them! What testimonies there are in favour of some of those which Protestants, even which all Christians, would be most eager to reject as proceeding from unhallowed sources, as brought to support false beliefs! Surely these are facts that deserve the most earnest reflection. We must be obliged to any one who forces them upon our notice. They indicate that craving in the hearts of men in all regions after some cause or power which they thought must be above nature, which they thought must be above themselves. Ought not this curious persuasion to be looked into? Is it enough to talk about the extraordinary love of men for the marvellous, their dissatisfaction with the common and the habitual? These sound very much like mere phrases. They explain the unknown by the more unknown. It is all very well to say that your abstract philosophy fails you when you pass beyond the limits of the visible world. But these are facts in the visible world. These concern the daily lives of men. You have taken immense pains to show that they concern the great majority of men. They may not concern the polite men and women in Parisian circles; but if they do concern the great multitude of human beings, not only the abstract philosopher, but the man who feels any sort of interest for his kind, must see what they signify. Hume may have been wonderfully good-natured and social; but when he dismisses all such inquiries with merely general phrases expressing

On Miracles, section x., pp. 127-154.

Jansenist miracles, *Note* to p. 145.

Fact of the demand for miracles needs explanation.

contempt for his race—there is no other epithet for it—he is *inhuman.* And this is all the more the case if, as he says and proves, there has been in these feelings about divine interference in the affairs of men much that has degraded and demoralized those who have entertained them—if the expectation of miracles has led them to deny a general order in the universe—if it has made them the prey of designers and the slaves of superstition. *Then* the inquiry becomes transcendently important. What is this principle in human nature which leads to the acknowledgment of these miracles? If there is any good in it, how can that be justified? How can the evil be cast out?

What Hume gives.

49. We only notice this inhumanity that we who are tempted to it by other motives than those which influenced the author of the *Essay on Miracles* may resolutely avoid it. Such inhumanity mingled with many of the arguments of the Christian advocates in that day. They found the craving for miracles not extinct among themselves. The Methodist movement had led to reports of many miracles. That movement proceeded on the idea that the highest divine power which was exerted in the first ages of the Church had not ceased to be exerted in that age. The great object which the regularly trained pleaders for Christianity proposed to themselves was to vindicate the miracles of the Bible at the expense of all such modern pretensions, from whatever quarter they might come. They admitted the general regularity of the divine government. They argued for special exceptions, which were necessary at a particular moment to confirm the truth of "the Christian religion," or otherwise, the "mission of Christ." In using this language they almost inevitably left the impression upon the minds of those who received their lessons—(1.) That a power had been at work seventeen centuries before which was not working then. (2.) That the Christian religion was not a message concerning the head of the whole human race, but only concerning the head of a particular sect, which stood apart from the human race. Against the first of these two maxims the Methodist movement—every movement which stirred the hearts of men—was a direct protest. Those who took part in it, practically, however incoherently, affirmed, that the spiritual power which was present at one time cannot cease to be present at all times, various as may be the modes of its manifestation. Against the second maxim they bore also a certain, though a still more confused and less effectual, witness. They affirmed that the Son of Man could not merely have been born into the world at a certain moment—that he was in communion then with their thoughts

The Methodist doctrine.

The respectable apologists.

Inferences from their teaching.

The protest against it.

and their lives. But they limited his lessons to themselves; they more carefully excluded the world from his government than those who said that he had come at a certain time to preach doctrines of great benefit to all men, and to vindicate for all men their immortality. Hume appeared between these two opposing forces, equally despising both, exposing the contradictions of both; but by that very exposure serving the interests of both—perhaps pointing out a way to their reconciliation. By bringing forward into such prominence the general human demand for divine interference in all countries and in all ages he vindicated the demand of the Methodists as at least one which could not be set aside on the plea that it belonged to the conceit of a few fanatical individuals. By showing that the answer to this demand has, in most cases, if not in all, been connected with human agency—with the assertion of some dominion of *man* over nature—he showed that a Son of Man, if there were such a person, would be likely to use some method for proving that he had such a dominion. By demonstrating that experience merely conducts us to a sequence of phenomena—not the least to a cause—he established a strong presumption, that if there is a Cause or Power such as men have dreamed of, it would be exhibited in acts transcending experience, though in acts interpreting experience—acts that might even indicate how the succession of thoughts in us becomes linked to the succession of events in nature, as Hume perceived that it was. But if a man, a Son of Man, did manifest this Cause or Power to men—did show what the character and mode of its operations are—that proof could not apply only to the moment in which the manifestation took place. It must be for all time. It must declare the Power in itself to be always the same, in its operations to be regular and harmonious. And so we might conclude that if such a manifestation could happen, the signs which confirmed it would be themselves the great witnesses against what is irregular and fortuitous—themselves one principal means of raising men above the tricks of ecclesiastics and diviners—themselves the assertors of that power of men over natural agents—of that right in man to combat with all the disorders in the universe which science proclaims and fatalism and superstition deny.

Hume's position in reference to the two parties.

What he proved.

How that proof affects the dispute.

50. But Hume had yet greater services to do for the cause which he desired to overthrow. In our account of Hobbes we observed that he assumed the only possible testimony to a supernatural Being to be the testimony of some man. If you believe in the veracity of a prophet, Hobbes said, when he declares that God spoke to him, then you believe that there is such a Being,

The doctrine of testimony.

Reference to Hobbes.

and you may act upon the communication which he reports; if you do not believe the prophet, you of course have no faith in the divine authority to which he refers. The only difference, therefore, he affirms, between any divine interference recorded in Livy and any recorded by a sacred writer is that you accept the sacred writer as a truthteller, and that you do not accept Livy. Had such a statement occurred only in Hobbes we might have regarded it as covert atheism—as implying a denial that God had any way of making Himself known to men. But

And to Pearson.

we were constrained to admit that Pearson, one of the most learned and devout of divines, whose *Exposition of the Creed* has become a text-book of English clergymen, had treated the whole subject of testimony precisely in the same manner—that he, just as much as Hobbes, assumed that the veracity of men was the ground of any assurance we had respecting the truth of God. For a century the habit of mind which this language indicated had been gaining strength. It was shaken, like that other part of the orthodox faith or unbelief to which we first referred,

The apostle quoted against his interpreters.

by the Methodists. They continually quoted the words of the apostle, that if *we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater*. They affirmed the witness of God with the heart and conscience of the humblest men to be mightier than all outward witnesses could be. But they mixed this witness with so much that clearly belonged to mere sensation and morbid temperament—in general, they limited it so carefully to themselves, and defined it by such artificial rules—that their appeals to Scripture and to the spirit of man, useful as they were, lost much of their force, and could be treated as mere folly and fanaticism.

Hume on testimony, *Works*, vol. iv., p. 150.

Hume again, though they must have been more offensive to him than to the most formal of their orthodox opponents, appears as their champion. The result of his argument should be given in his own words, though most of our readers are probably well acquainted with it. "On the whole, then, it appears that no testimony for any kind of miracle has amounted to a probability, far less to a proof, and that even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof, derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavour to establish. It is experi-

Impossibility of believing miracles.

ence only which gives authority to human testimony, and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, these two kinds of experiences are contrary, we have nothing to do but to subtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion either on one side or the other, with that assurance which arises from the remainder. But, according to the principle here explained, this subtraction, with regard to all popular religion, amounts to an entire annihilation; and therefore we may establish it as a maxim that no human testimony can have such a force as to prove a miracle, and to make it a just foundation for any such system of religion."

Importance of these positions.

51. A most instructive passage certainly, which all divines and all men ought seriously to ponder! It must be taken along with the other evidence which Hume has produced of the cry among all people for some power which shall prove itself to be supernatural—in other words, which shall show them that they are not merely the slaves of nature, that *they* do not belong merely to a sequence of phenomena. And then most heartily and cheerfully do we acknowledge that he has proved his point; that no testimony of man *can* establish the existence of any transcendant fact; that human veracity cannot be the ground of belief in anything divine; that if there is not a divine veracity beneath that human veracity it will turn into a lie; that if there is a divine veracity at the basis of human veracity it can make itself known to men—it can reveal itself. This we take to be the doctrine of prophets and apostles. If it had ceased to be the doctrine of the eighteenth century it was most desirable that such a man as Hume should arise to bring it back, even if he had an excuse for using such language as the following:—"I am the better pleased with the method of reasoning here delivered, as I think it may serve to confound those dangerous friends or disguised enemies to the Christian religion who have undertaken to defend it by the principles of human reason. Our most holy religion is founded on faith, not on reason; and it is a sure method of exposing it to put it to such a trial as it is by no means fitted to endure." And again, "So that upon the whole we may conclude that the Christian religion was not only at first attended with miracles, but even at this day cannot be believed by any reasonable person without one. Mere reason is insufficient to convince us of its veracity; and whoever is moved by faith to assent to it is conscious of a continual miracle in his own person, which subverts all the principles of his understanding, and gives him a determination to believe what is most contrary to custom and experience." The mere jest in this passage is too old and familiar—it has been repeated in too many forms during a whole century—to retain much of its effect. But there is a serious meaning beneath the jest, which is perhaps more important to us now than it was when these words first went forth. Hume here opposes reason to faith. But, as we have seen, it has been no part of his business, or of the business of those French philosophers in whose school he studied, to exalt the reason. Voltaire had laughed at those who fancied that it was

Human and divine veracity.

Hume's desire to defend Christianity from its enemies, vol. iv., p. 153-154.

Reason and faith.

capable of the exercises to which it had been put. He preferred Locke to Descartes and Malebranche, because the former had limited the sphere of the reason, to which the latter, according to him and the Jesuits, had given such dangerous play. Hume's whole occupation had been to show that there is no reason except an experience which follows the impressions of sense. On *this* ground—as the strict and logical inference from *these* premises—he treats miracles, Christianity, all supernatural faith whatever, as unreasonable. Let this point be well considered. Let the advocates of Christianity ask themselves, in the most solemn moments of their lives, whether they are not very often indeed adopting the premises from which the acutest of debaters showed that these conclusions must follow; whether in their attacks upon reason they are not confirming his attacks upon faith; whether it would not be better to look a little into his premises, and to inquire if reason is indeed, as he says, identical with experience; whether faith may not owe something to those who, in whatever country they were born, or by whatever names they are described, have pursued his inquiry a little further than he cared to pursue it, and have been brought to the conviction that reason and experience are *not* identical.

Consequences of identifying reason and experience.

This confusion common among opponents of Hume.

Natural History of Religion, *Works*, vol. iv., pp. 435-513.

52. Hume's *Natural History of Religion* stands in close relation to this subject; but it suggests some thoughts which are not directly suggested by the *Inquiry*, and which cannot be set at rest merely by a consideration of the distinction between reason and experience. Hume's treatise stands in curious contrast to the "New Science" of Vico. While the poor Italian is seeing in all the mythologies of the nations footprints of a common humanity—signs of what men in every land are feeling after and hoping for—the easy and comfortable Scotchman casts his eye over the different faiths that have prevailed in the earth, that he may find excuses for despising and condemning his fellow-creatures, that he may wonder at the difference between them and himself, or the Paris circles which had "loaded him with their civilities." Even when he sees the priests of different nations and beliefs leading their victims astray, and making them miserable, his equanimity is never disturbed by the least indignation against the impostors, or by pity for the dupes. He seems to consider that it is all as it should be; they were made for each other; or, if he were absurd enough to indulge in speculations about final causes, made to furnish him and his friends with some pleasant entertainment. Nevertheless, it was desirable that this dark side of things should be presented to us as well as the other. It is well that we should

Spirit of the book.

have all the facts before us which show how much dark superstition there has been in the world, to how many evils it has been able to persuade men, what excuse there is for tracing their thoughts of the supernatural world only to terror. It is well that we should receive such a picture from a man whose interest it is to make it as black as possible; not that we may feel the contrast between ourselves and others, but that we may feel the perils by which we are all beset—the darkness into which any one of us may fall. And Hume has not only given us these warnings; he has brought out into great prominence a truth of quite unspeakable importance. In his eagerness to show that nations are all naturally polytheistic—that the idea of a one cause of the world does not really affect their minds at all—that this idea is the product of that abstract philosophy which he has been exposing in his *Inquiry*—he dwells upon the great fact, which should be the most obvious of all to the student of mythology, and yet which is continually forgotten for its obviousness, that the gods of all people, however they may differ in other respects, are fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives; that it is only in later times they are reduced into abstract conceptions or powers of nature. This one hint is perhaps worth more than all the mythological speculations of later days, interesting and valuable as many of them have been. It takes us far beyond, perhaps far beneath, that idea of a cause with which Hume has been before occupied. It shows us how that idea of a cause may have been wrought into the hearts of human beings without any abstract philosophy. The idea of a *Creat*or may have come forth gradually; the idea of a *Fathe*r lies hid in the heart of every child. A revelation which substantiates that idea, and makes it the ground of all others, proving it to be human, *because* divine, contains the theology which is able to deliver human beings from debasing mythologies, which is opposed to all "systems of religion." Such a revelation, we thought, was demanded by the *Emile* of Rousseau. In protesting against the neglect of children by their parents, that writer was implicitly protesting against the loss of the idea of a Divine Father amongst the priests of his land. Hume, in a very different way, by a far less humane exhibition of human corruptions, was teaching the priests of his land how much this idea of a Father had been exchanged among them for that of a mere sovereign or a mere *Opifex Mundi*, and how little either of these would be able to sustain a national morality, or to prevent a people from sinking into such a religion as that of which he has given "the natural history," or into such an atheism as that of which he was himself the propagandist.

Value of it.

The idea of kinsmanship and fatherhood in all religions.

The revelation of a Father.

The *Emile* and the *Natural History*.

Adam Smith (1723-1790).

First impressions of political economy.

Time of the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*.

53. In a history of Scotch philosophy it would become us to notice the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* of Hume's illustrious friend, Adam Smith. Even in such a history, a notice of them would be rather due to the fame which their author has earned in another direction, than to any influence which has proceeded from his *Ethics*. Here we avail ourselves of the connection which that book establishes with our subject, to notice what else might be regarded as extraneous to it. The *Wealth of Nations* ought to have a more than accidental tie to moral and metaphysical philosophy. If we trusted to "impressions," and regarded our ideas only as "copies of our impressions," we might conclude that political economy, in the form which it took at this time both in England and France, would destroy metaphysics, and would make morals entirely dependent upon the outward conditions of man. In that way Adam Smith would be a co-operator with Hume; the *Wealth of Nations* would be a kind of pendant to the *Principles of Morals;* it would be an additional weight in the scale that was making experience the one standard by which all acts and all principles were to be tried. No doubt there would be many arguments to justify this view of the effects of the economical or Plutonomical investigations which Adam Smith helped so much to inaugurate in our country. And that they should have been undertaken at the very moment when the manufacturing industry of England was expanding in such new and marvellous directions—when the Indian world was unfolding itself to our commerce, and was converting the idea of commerce into that of empire—may appear to confirm these expectations, and to show that henceforth the visible world would afford such occupation for men as to shut out from them all dreams of the invisible; which would become more than ever the entertainment only of women or children.

Another view of the subject.

How physical laws evidence moral laws.

54. But those who do not yield at once to impressions, who find that they are generally delusive, may see some cause to question these results, or at least to foresee some others as likely to counterbalance them. If it is discovered that there are laws regulating the production, distribution, exchange of commodities, it can scarcely be supposed, as much as heretofore, that what men are to get depends upon the restlessness of their cupidity; that what they lose they lose only by chance. Fortune must be less reverenced as a goddess than men are disposed to reverence her. That the thought of a law—that awful, tremendous thought—should be carried even into the acts of buying and selling—that a man should feel he cannot do what he likes even in these acts—this scarcely indicates an escape from the region of moral government; it rather bears witness how far that region

extends. For what if these laws are said to be "*physical laws?*" They do in some sort bind human agents. They interfere with their schemes and plots. And if men find something in themselves which makes them *choose* a different course from the one which the law prescribes, they must also find some way of bringing their choice into harmony with the law. It is probable that they will not discover that influence in the physical law. Probably the knowledge of *it* will not prove quite sufficient to overcome an inclination to disobey it. Then there must be some other force sought for which can do what it fails to do.

Adam Smith's doctrines awaken an opposition from private interests.

Case of the slave trade and slavery.

Physical and metaphysical laws in harmony.

First dreams of economists.

Smith does not encourage them.

55. These are no mere imaginations. Adam Smith's doctrines at once roused against them what seemed the obvious self-interest of a multitude of monopolists who traded with different commodities, who traded also in the bodies and souls of men. He proclaimed that these supposed interests of theirs clashed with everlasting laws. He averred, for instance, as strongly as any man, that the cultivation of the soil by slaves is not good for a land—not good for those who buy or sell the slaves any more than for those who are bought and sold. But no proclamation of this law—though there was enough in the facts which he knew to convince him of its existence—though all facts which have come to our knowledge since support his judgment—could do more than bring to light the passions which opposed it, the power of these passions to set it at nought. If they were to be vanquished, it must be by some power and influence which was *not* contained in the physical law. Some law which recognizes the worth and sacredness of men, which asserts the difference between persons and things, had to be called in—a judge had to be invoked who would assert that difference, who would vindicate that higher law. In this instance (which is but an instance, though it may be the crucial one of the principle) it was shown that economical laws are not and cannot be at variance with moral and metaphysical laws—cannot dispense with them; that each imply the other; that the lower must be controlled and sustained by the higher. In the first fever of a new discovery that which is discovered might be imagined to be all-sufficing, all-absorbing. Political economy might for awhile appear to be a new alchemy. Adam Smith might be worshipped as the finder of the elixir or the philosopher's stone. But he made no profession of turning all things into gold; he rather used what incantations and exorcisms he knew, to expel the spirit which tempted men to that ambition. If he did not find all the incantations and exorcisms that were necessary, he at least pointed out many of the mischiefs in our social polity that required them. No one will have been more compelled to feel

His experience of the way in which experience misleads.

the difficulty, the almost impossibility, of persuading men to embrace his convictions, still more to act upon them. He will have been persecuted continually by that phrase which was so sacred in the judgment of his friend. "Experience is against you." He will have been told that he was setting up a reason which was above experience and at variance with experience. He will have been charged with resorting to an abstract or abstruse philosophy when the easy and obvious one was what men required. He may have sometimes been tempted to adapt to his own case words which, in their original application, he no doubt accepted as profoundly witty and oracular. If any tradesman, or merchant, or statesman put faith in his sound and scientific maxims he "must be conscious of a continual miracle in his own person, which subverted" all that he had been used to consider "the principles of his understanding, and gave him a determination to believe what is most contrary to" the "custom and experience" of himself and his guild.

Thomas Reid (1709-1796).

Modern Frenchmen own their obligations to him.

56. David Hume received the tone of his mind, the direction of all his speculations, from France. It was the privilege of Thomas Reid to requite the obligation. In our century he has exercised a powerful influence over Frenchmen. Some of the most remarkable and effectual thinkers of that country have confessed that he was the means of delivering them from the philosophy which they had learnt from Condillac; that he opened to them a new path of inquiry, and that though they could not stand still at the point which he reached, they should not have advanced a step without his guidance. These acknowledgments, so honourable to those who have made them, so honourable to the object of them, must give Reid an interest in the minds of all students. The worth of a man's thoughts cannot be tested so well as by their power of awakening and enkindling thoughts; we are sure that he must have worked for himself when he can work on others. We might arrive at the same conclusion by observing the serious care which has been devoted to the *Inquiry into the Human Mind* and the *Essay on the Intellectual and Active Powers* by a man possessing so large a range of knowledge, such a thorough acquaintance with the philosophers of all ages, as the late Sir William Hamilton. If he had not discovered in this author some very distinct, marked characteristics which he did not see in the majority of those who had undertaken the philosophical business in his land, and had obtained credit in that line, we can scarcely suppose that he would have devoted to an edition of Reid's works a time and labour which might have been so profitably bestowed on a general philosophical history, or upon investigations of his own. Though an undoubted patriot, Sir William was not scrupulous

Testimony of Sir William Hamilton.

He evidently considers Reid different in kind from the philosophers of his country and school.

in denouncing the popular lectures of his countryman Brown. He seems to have had only that respect for Dugald Stewart which all would pay to a worthy man and a graceful writer. The significance, therefore, which he attached to Reid indicates his opinion that he was worthy to stand as the representative of a genuine native philosophy. He may have acknowledged that Hume possessed a more exquisite faculty of pursuing certain principles to their remote consequences. But he appears to have recognized in Reid the assertor, if not the discoverer, of a principle which Hume, as well as Locke, had ignored.

Ritter's judgment of him.

Not an eclectic.

What is an eclectic?

Such classification mischievous.

57. We appeal to these high authorities in support of Reid's claim to hold a place of his own in the philosophical history of the eighteenth century, because Ritter, in his *History of Christian Philosophy,* has confounded him with the rest of what he calls the Scotch School, combining under that general name men of the most various characteristics—men who, though they might exhibit traits of family likeness, were pursuing different and often contradictory objects. The other designation which Ritter bestows upon them, and especially upon Reid, is, as far as he is concerned, still more inappropriate: he calls him an eclectic. A plea for such a name may possibly be found in the fact to which we have just alluded. He was a stepping-stone over which some distinguished Frenchmen passed from their own sensation philosophy to the understanding, if not the acceptance, of some of the more recent German speculations. An eclectic may mean for Ritter a person who does not belong to either of these extremes. But that is certainly a novel use of the word. We ordinarily understand by an eclectic one who, with different philosophies before him, chooses portions out of each which he embraces and portions which he rejects. Cicero, in this sense, was an eclectic, though, in fact, his eclecticism meant not so much a mixture of the academy with the porch, as that he grafted an academical scepticism upon a Roman habit of belief. There was a more formal eclecticism among those who were trying to resuscitate old philosophies after the Christian era. The name, for reasons which we may speak of hereafter, has acquired some reputation in our day. Ritter is right, we doubt not, in using it to designate his own countryman, Christian Wolff. At all events, we should defer to his authority without hesitation in determining the place of that diligent person, and should suppose that a mistake about his exact title would be of very slight consequence. In the case of Reid we think otherwise. It is important that a man who has had a distinct purpose of his own, who has thought out something, whatever it be, for himself, should not, through the use of an ambiguous phrase, be supposed to have been a mere gleaner from other men's sheaves. It is important for the sake

of true history not to commit the anachronism of supposing that he had the results of the French and German speculations before him, and that he was striking a balance between them. The point is one upon which we make no apology for spending some words, seeing that it concerns a habit of treating all writers as well as Reid, which has increased, is increasing, and we think, as soon as possible, ought to be diminished.

Reid—wherein like Hume.

58. Thomas Reid, it seems to us, was a simple, honest Scotchman, who had no dream at all of adjusting the claims of different philosophies, but who did not choose that philosophers, by whatever name they called themselves, should rob him of facts which he needed for his life, under pretence of explaining them. In appearance, therefore, he resembled Hume. Both often speak against an abstract philosophy which is interfering with the sense that belongs to common people. Both betake themselves to abstract philosophy under the plea of protecting this common sense from violation. But the likeness is a merely superficial one. They do not attach the same meaning to common sense, but the most opposite meanings, such as suited their different objects and modes of regarding the universe. Hume's easy and obvious philosophy is, as he takes every opportunity to let us know, the philosophy of refined people; one with which the vulgar cannot intermeddle. He dislikes the abstruse or abstract philosophy because, as it is ordinarily used, it supplies a defence to certain notions and superstitions of the vulgar; he condescends to meddle with it that he may relieve his friends, who prize the other philosophy, from any fear that this may deprive them of their advantage, and reduce them to the level of the herd. Reid, the son of a Presbyterian clergyman, belonging to that order himself, regards common sense as quite another thing from this fine Parisian sense. It is literally for him the sense which is common to men; to philosophers, so far as they care to take up the position of men. It is that which he finds in himself. Is it, then, a sixth sense—a something over and above those five through which Locke teaches that all wisdom must come? He does not affirm this. What need to embarrass a subject which he desires to make plain, by any new abstract conception, such as this might be? But is not there some one to whom these five senses bring their reports? Do not I see whatever my sight tells me of? Do not I hear whatever even my ears tell me of? And is not the consciousness that I do see this flower, hear this sound, smell this smell, more to me than all questions about impressions, or ideas that are copies of impressions—the innateness or non-innateness of ideas? Give me all the lore you please about these matters—talk to me out of Descartes, or Locke, or Hume—when you have done, I still shall hold fast to the con-

Common sense has a different meaning in their mouths.

What Reid's common sense is.

Consciousness.

viction, "I did see this very house; I did smell this very rose." And, moreover, I shall be sure that that belief concerns me more—that it goes nearer to fact and the root of things—than all your disquisitions, or even than those outward things, or those senses about which you discourse. For what would the things be to me, what would the sense be to me, if there was not an internal assurance, conviction, or, as I call it, *consciousness*, of that which these things declare to me, of that which my senses experience of the things. It may seem to philosophers who are busy about these controversies a very commonplace remark that I have this consciousness. I admit it to be a commonplace. I insist that it is a commonplace. But if it is a commonplace which you have not chosen to take account of in your speculations, and if it is one which is all in all to me, I shall torment you with it. For my own sake, and for the interest of my kind, I will hunt you through your different theories till I get it fairly confessed; not as something which you may put aside into the back corner of a scheme, but as something more precious and essential than all schemes.

The assurance of facts.

Glory in commonplace.

59. If our report does no justice to the care and elaboration which Reid bestowed upon his subject, we may at least have given some hint of the serious and resolute way in which he contemplated it. His circumstances were unfavourable to the acquisition of that easy and graceful manner which made Hume acceptable to every kind of readers. But such a manner would have been as entirely out of keeping with his character and intentions as they were in harmony with those of his contemporary. From a man who refers all things to sensible impressions, who recognizes no experience which is not derived from them, we expect and demand a stream of thought undisturbed by eddies or cross currents. It may be shallow; it must be clear. It is quite otherwise when a man is led by any process to the near contemplation of himself—when that which he receives from without becomes less real to him than that which he feels within. There is an embarrassment and awkwardness in every man when he begins to speak of what *he* is aware of, of what *he* is. He is very confident that he is speaking truth, yet he is half-ashamed of his confidence. He wishes to submit his consciousness to all tests, yet is there not something dangerous and profane in the proclamation of them? May not the consciousness perish in the act of dissecting it? Reid escapes some of these difficulties—not all. He is more anxious to appeal to his fellow-creatures whether they do not find that there is this consciousness in them; he thinks it safer to let his discovery stand on the verdict of general opinion than to lay bare what is passing in himself.

Reid's style not easy, like Hume's.

Reason of the difference.

Self-consciousness.

Escape to general opinion.

The forms of self-consciousness.

60. Reid had not the temptation which some have to depart from this modesty. Those upon whom the consciousness of a relation to the unseen world bursts with tremendous force at a certain crisis of their lives—those who are roused to a strong consciousness of their own evil—those in whom the consciousness is awakened of some vague longings which they cannot satisfy—may seek a vent for their feelings in personal confessions; even if they do not, their language will have a gravitation towards egotism; if they half own by their desire for other men's confidence that their experience must be human, yet they have also the sense of its being very peculiar and individual. There were no such perturbations in Reid. He was thinking of the visible world, not of the invisible. He affirmed that the consciousness of what he saw and handled alone gave him an interest in that which he saw and handled. He thus came far more directly into contact with things which his senses reported of than Locke and his disciples. He admitted no intervening barrier of ideas or impressions between him and the things. He saw *them*, he handled *them*. And he had not the least disposition to suspect their existence. If in one respect he appeared to resemble Berkeley in that the processes within were more to him than the objects without, yet those processes gave him the strongest assurance of the outward fact; they *were* that assurance. Reid, therefore, might fairly claim to be putting himself on the level of those of his fellow-creatures, if such there were, who were merely exercising their senses. He had not to beg for any unusual specimens of humanity. He could meet the believers in sensation upon their own ground. Let everything in us come from them, still, *what* are they? Are they not parts of myself? And I? Here Reid might have been content to stop. But it is hard to advance so far and not to get a glimpse of something behind and beyond. If I am conscious of those things, am I conscious of nothing besides those things? Has not man recognized certain obligations of right and wrong—certain duties? Has he not bowed before an unseen Being? Had all these nothing to do with consciousness? How can you say *these* consciousnesses are not trustworthy as well as the others? In fact, is not trustworthiness involved in the very nature of consciousness? If I have it I have it. Can much more be said?

Reid occupied with the visible world chiefly.

Opposed to Berkeley.

How far at one with the philosopher of sensation.

Vision of something besides the world of sense.

The hint of consciousness, why important at this time.

61. Perhaps much more might be said about this consciousness; much more has been said. The merit of Reid seems to us chiefly that he uttered the name, and set men to consider what was implied in the name. This was a signal service: just at this moment an indispensable service. There was, on the one hand, the easy, obvious philosophy of Hume, making sensible experience the all in all of human life, and the abstruse philo-

Hume's experience.

Religious experiences.

The two worlds.

Need of distinctions.

sophy of Hume cutting to pieces all the confused notions which had prevailed of a Cause that lay in some inconceivable manner within the bounds of experience, and yet beyond it. On the other hand, there arose a multitude of earnest people both in England and Scotland, who talked in what seemed to Hume and his followers an utterly mystical and ridiculous manner of their spiritual experiences, and who seemed to build their faith upon these. Reid, though he would have been as little esteemed by the one class as by the other, and though his teaching could never be a substitute for that of either, was yet a link between them. Whatever world might lie before us, whatever world might lie behind us, there is a creature who must take account of one or the other. Whatever is in either becomes his by becoming a part of his consciousness. Could either party deny this position without denying its own? It might be most desirable that there should be a clear distinction between the two subjects of this consciousness. The confusion in them might be the cause of much of the superstition, much of the religious phantasy, which had prevailed in all ages. It might hereafter be equally needful to distinguish the consciousness from that which awakens it in one sphere or in the other. A number of inquiries, of which Reid scarcely gave the hint—of which he scarcely dreamed — might arise from the discovery of difficulties which he left unsettled. But the ground which he occupied, if it were only a strip of borderland, was yet one which must be claimed and reduced into legal possession, that the lands on either side might not be the subject of perpetual raids and forays, to the destruction of the pastures and flocks of both.

Dangers of a conscious philosophy.

Philosophy becomes a Scotch profession.

62. There was, however, we have observed already, great peril in the attempt to make this debateable ground independent. A philosopher of consciousness might be one of the blessings to mankind. A tribe of such philosophers would almost certainly be one of its plagues. For the consciousness would either become a morbid, troublesome, egotistical consciousness, or it would become a consciousness that aspired to be the foundation of a universe, spiritual or physical, instead of merely the recognition of one. Or it would be a mere talk about consciousnesses—the most wearisome talk that can be listened to, and the most unreal. Or it would be nothing else than the ground of a Reidian theory as opposed to a Humian, or a Lockian, or a Helvetian theory. Such a theory became soon a good topic for Edinburgh discourse. It could be shown clearly, and to the satisfaction of all men, that Scotchmen had originated a philosophy of their own; indeed, one or two philosophies, and that they could defend it or them against the universe. So philo-

sophy became a profession there, as it had become in France, mixed with the professions of *Belles Lettres*, of Natural Science, of Economy and Statistics; sometimes subordinate to these, but still delighting to assume the name of psychology or metaphysics. Vast talent was no doubt exhibited and consumed in the theory and practice of this profession; but the most serious and profound Scotchmen of later days have hailed the appearance of the Ayrshire ploughman poet as an element of wholesome human reality brought into the midst of an atmosphere thick and heavy with notions and book lore. They say that his songs brought back to them the belief in green fields and hills, as well as the fact of their belonging to a land on which their fathers had dwelt and suffered before them; and that his life showed them there is need, in the heart of every peasant, of a hope to raise him and protect him against himself, as well as against his rich patrons, which neither the divinity nor the philosophy of Scotland at that time afforded; which was not offered by old light formalism or new light experiences; which was not found necessary by the polite circles that Hume frequented, and which only glimmered faintly through the consciousness and common sense of Reid; but of which Burns could see the pledge and the promise in the domestic life of his sires, and in the testimony they bore to a Father whose righteousness the earthly father was feebly to exhibit in his own.

Robert Burns a witness against the professional philosophy.

Needs to which he pointed.

Edmund Burke (1730–1797).

63. England in the last half of this century was, we have remarked, doing little to vindicate the claim which she had set up in the earlier half of it to be the philosophical teacher of the nations. Of all Locke's works the *Essay on Government* was the only one which was to receive any new and striking illustrations from those who thought, wrote, and spoke. And the philosopher who more than any other, by his studies and his career, expounded the subject of that book, may be claimed by England only in so far as he owed to her the cultivation of his powers and the opportunity of their exercise, only in so far as he devoted himself to her service. Ireland will never allow it to be forgotten, and would be very wrong if she did, that Edmund Burke belongs primarily to her. An exaggerated importance may have been assigned to his birthplace in estimating the qualities of his mind, even of his oratory, but it cannot be overlooked in any fair record of his life. It is more a duty to notice Burke's native country in a sketch of philosophical history than it would be in a treatise which regarded him mainly as a statesman, because his earliest works, which are formally, though not really, the most connected with our subject, exhibit the kind of power which he must have brought with him, and which must have received its direction in Ireland.

England and Ireland.

This remark applies especially to his *Vindication of Natural Society*, that exceedingly clever parody on Bolingbroke which, by what strikes a modern reader as an almost incredible blunder, was taken for a little while to be the writing of the aristocratical freethinker. The humour of the piece consists in the utter contradiction between its object and the character of the writer whose style it imitates so well. A natural society—a society stripped of everything that was adventitious and refined—would have been more horrible to Bolingbroke than to any man who ever talked or lived. Therefore, to suppose that his arguments in favour of natural and against revealed religion might be legitimately followed to this result, was an *argumentum ad hominem*, and one exhibiting that peculiar dexterity for which Irishmen are remarkable. That special kind of wit is never so well managed as in their hands.

His earliest works show the most special Irish talent.

Bolingbroke.

Cleverness of Burke's parody.

64. But an *argumentum ad hominem* is dangerous, even when it is managed with the greatest art and for the best purposes. Much as we reverence Burke, and greatly as we should enjoy any triumph he could win over Bolingbroke, we are bound to say that his jest contained a very serious confusion of words and principles. Bolingbroke had attacked *revealed* religion. The counterpart of that which he had attacked is taken to be *artificial* society. Revealed religion was then—to make the point of the ridicule good—an artificial addition to natural religion; the graft of certain maxims, dogmas, institutions upon that which had its root in the constitution of things. Now revelation or discovery ought certainly to mean something very different from this. According to the derivation of the word, according to the use which it always bears in Scripture, it should import the showing forth that which is deepest in the constitution of things. That Burke departed from this usage was not caused by any wilfulness of his own. He did not beg, for the convenience of his wit, a meaning which was not sanctioned by his time. It *was* sanctioned; it was the conception which prevailed everywhere. Scarcely any one will have been startled by his identification of the revealed with the adventitious. Almost all will have wondered that it could bear any other sense. We notice the occurrence of that which seems to us so great an abuse of language in the writing of the most distinguished man of the day, for this very reason. It was that commonplace of his age. We believe it infected his noblest thoughts. If he had not yielded to it, he might have been less able to do the work which was given him to do; for his contemporaries would have been less unable to understand him. But the fallacy in this earliest book is one which we

The error which is latent in it.

The revealed and the artificial.

The common confusion of the time.

It goes through Burke's life.

may trace throughout his history, and which never became more conspicuous than towards the close of it.

The *Inquiry Concerning the Sublime and Beautiful.*

65. Whatever may be thought in our days of the *Inquiry Concerning the Sublime and Beautiful*, it must always possess great interest as an illustration of Burke's mind, and as the commencement of an æsthetical science in England. The preface to it is, in fact, a preface to his political writings. The maxim that definitions should not begin, but terminate an inquiry, shows how completely Burke was possessed by the spirit of induction—how sure he was in all cases to resist formal dogmas and generalizations of the intellect—to study facts, and to seek for principles in facts. Whether he was examining the feelings with which men regard a thunderstorm, or the circumstances of colonies struggling with the mother country, or the attempt to rebuild the institutions of an old country on a declaration of rights,—he would equally scout definitions which assume laws; he would seek for the laws through that which they govern. There is little difficulty, it may be said, in applying such maxims to the subject discussed in the *Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful;* only slight perversities of human will interfere with the influences which we receive from nature and art; the observer of these influences is not himself tied and bound by the conditions of a school. How could they bear to be tested in the infinite complications of modern politics? How could Burke, who was the apologist of party, who submitted habitually to all the obligations of a party, be the person to use the tests? Must not some rough, ready-made definitions—or if not definitions, oratorical commonplaces—stand in the place of any careful inquiries into the order of human life, into the relations and duties of society or individuals to each other? Did not Burke bind himself to a set of Whig definitions which must have controlled his thoughts and acts, as he wished them to control the acts and thoughts of his sovereign and his fellow-subjects? These questions cannot be evaded. They concern the metaphysics of Englishmen more than we may at first imagine.

His inductive temper.

Supposed difficulty of applying a method which befits æsthetics to politics.

Natural students learning of politicians.

66. We remarked, in speaking of Bacon, that the habits of observation and experiment which he applied to nature were derived at first from intercourse with his father and the shrewd lawyers or statesmen of his time. Their methods of dealing with the acts and characters of men made him impatient of the school definitions, which settled beforehand into what classes facts should be reduced, which assumed all that facts should make known. By the time of Burke the investigators of nature had been able to return to the politician more than they had ever received from him. The grandeur of those investigations, the

habit of conversing with fixed principles which bend to no wishes of ours, stood in direct contrast to the proceedings of the ordinary statesman, *e. g.*, of a statesman so finished in his own style as Walpole. But to a student and observer of history it continually suggested the thought, that caprice and chicanery never could be at the bottom of human transactions any more than of the course of nature; that these *disturb* the relations of human beings to each other, and must always be taken into account in any consideration about their practical working; but that they do not the least determine what those relations are; that, in fact, the course of the world goes on in spite of them, not by means of them. A man studying, for instance, such a policy as Walpole's, with this preparation of mind, would be disposed to think that it had succeeded, so far as it had succeeded, not at all because the statesman knew every man's price, but because, consciously or unconsciously, he was working in harmony with certain principles; because he was recognizing better than most the dependence of the monarch upon the laws; because he was hindering the desire of his sovereign to engage in foreign wars; and that the part of his arrangements upon which he perhaps prided himself most would have been destructive of these good results, if it had not encountered a powerful resistance, and *was* most damaging to them so far as it undermined the moral habits of Englishmen, and their respect for their own institutions. A man starting with these reflections, not yet immersed in the business of the world, scarcely expecting to have any great share in it, might well believe that there is an inductive study which belongs to the politician as much as to the naturalist—that if it is faithfully pursued it may lead to a much nobler morality than statesmen had been wont to exhibit; yet, that the morality could not be a formal, technical one of rules and maxims—that it could only reach its ends if it adapted itself to the conditions and character of the nation to the conduct of which it was applied. Nor is it an idle fancy that a man beginning with this apprehension of a connection between natural studies and those which concern human societies, would recognize with great delight a certain middle kind of study between these, which might bridge over the distance between them. That which we have learnt to call the study of Art concerns not only the influence of nature upon men, but the powers and capacities in men which receive impressions from nature, adapt them, remould them. Into such a study must enter a number of considerations concerning the various tempers and characters of men, even concerning the influences of climates, traditions, institutions, upon them. However far, therefore, it may seem to be removed from the sphere of a statesman's pursuits or acti-

Politicians benefited by natural studies.

Walpole's policy studied by an experimental thinker

The statesman's morality.

The study of Art.

vities, it may have a special attraction for him; he may find in it a useful preparation for his work, as well as the counteraction of some of its more degrading tendencies.

The student and the practical man.

67. But it would not have been good for Burke—it certainly would have been bad for his country—that he should be merely a student of politics, not an actual politician. He might have escaped a number of petty intrigues, which must soil every man's character and dim the lustre of his fame — he might have been betrayed into far fewer excesses of temper and oratorical exaggeration; but a thousand lessons which he could only teach by going through them would have been unlearnt, if he had reasoned on affairs from the outside; his political philosophy would have lost much—would have appeared to lose all —of that experimental character in which its great virtue consists. That such a man should come forth in his earliest political treatise, pleading for party as party, seeming almost to treat it as implied in the existence of the English constitution—at all events as essential to its preservation—is no doubt a humiliating circumstance, which at first tempts us to accept Goldsmith's line as the real explanation of his friend's life. If that treatise stood alone, without the final requiem over the party to which he had devoted himself in his *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, it might have a mischievous effect on the morality of young statesmen of our day. But taken along with this commentary it is a striking illustration of Burke's peculiar genius that he could discover in that which had such a coarse outside, that which had been converted to such mean uses, its true historical significance as the protection of the responsibility of the ministers of the crown against the inclination of the king to rule by personal friends and favourites. The infirmity of a particular monarch became the occasion for developing a principle. And the process is not only valuable as illustrating the application of the inductive method to politics; it must have had a great practical value in leading his Whig friends to think of their union as something more than a mere fellowship of certain families to obtain the honours and offices of government.

His defence of party. *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents.*

The significance of party.

The subjects to which he devoted himself.

68. Such a commencement was a true prophecy of the purposes to which he would direct, so far as the influence of plebeian wisdom could direct, his party, both in the choice of subjects for its energy and in its mode of handling them. The conciliation of America might have been one of many topics which an opposition could have adopted to embarrass a government madly determined upon proving its right to tax the New England States, or upon extracting a revenue from them. Burke saw that the administration of colonies was *the* subject of the day. He applied his industry to understand the whole condition, finan-

The American colonies.

cial, political, religious, of those which were disaffected. He considered their present temper and the traditions of their fathers. He cast aside all dreary formulas about the abstract right of a mother country to lay burthens upon the dependencies which it helped to support—the abstract wrong of taxing those who were not represented. Is it wise to insist upon the right supposing we possess it? Is there not a relation between us which we are to treat as carefully, as delicately, as we would treat any domestic relation? These were the questions which he asked. So he reduced the question *apparently* to one of state expediency. *Really* he showed that there is involved in state expediency a deeper morality, a more difficult morality, and at the same time a more simple practical morality, than is to be found in the dogmas of any school, whether of imperialists or patriots—a morality involving frankness, generosity, guilelessness—all the qualities that are the most remote from the ordinary tricks of statesmen and diplomatists. By enforcing this principle, with that statistical knowledge which he had acquired at the cost of much midnight oil, he gave an elevation to the whole argument, while yet he brought it home to the consciences and practical experience of ordinary people; he educed out of that special case maxims that can never grow old or lose their force while nations exist or have the power of doing right and wrong. We use these words, "right and wrong," intentionally. Burke did feel, and does make us feel, more than any statesman of any age, that a nation *can* do right and wrong—that every wrong act must bring its recompense. But it is not true, as we have endeavoured to show, that he was

Indifference to formulas.

Burke's expediency.

The right and the expedient.

> "Too fond of the right to pursue the expedient."

It is rather true that he was so fond of the right that he was always pursuing the expedient. He could adopt the very language of the apostle,—"Things may be lawful for us which are not expedient." In saying so he, like his original, was not presenting to his countrymen a lower standard than that which the enforcers of legal claims would have bidden them follow, but a higher one. "We may, if we like, change rods for scorpions;" this is the language of those gallant spirits who inscribe "No concession, no expediency" on their banners. "If you do change rods for scorpions you are gratifying your passion and vanity, and sacrificing the well-being of your subjects and of your country, and verily you will be called to a reckoning for that crime;" this was the language of Burke.

His expediency involves a self-sacrificing morality.

69. There is scarcely a more startling contrast than that which is presented by the petty squabbles respecting the coalition ministry, in which Burke took so large a share, and the

India.

grand question of the administration of India, to which he gave his heart and imagination almost at the same time. They illustrate together the special moral temptation of the English statesman, and the great moral counteraction which is provided against it—for the help of any wise and honest man—in the awful responsibilities which the possession of dominion lays upon the nation and upon those who can, by their words or acts, influence the conduct of it. Burke's imagination. Those who think that the vigour of Burke's imagination interfered with his practical merits should reflect what an imagination was required that he might see a meaning in the immense mass of details with which this subject forced him to acquaint himself, His need of it. and that he might realize in any degree the mightiness of the trust which had been committed to us, of ancient kingdoms, races, faiths,—while the majority of his countrymen were only thinking of the new and splendid field which had been opened to individual, corporate, and official cupidity. The power which he was able to exert. That he could infuse into the minds of men, deadened by the sight and participation of these prizes to avarice and ambition, any keen feeling that they were concerned in the sins that were committed by their agents against a people at the distance of a six months' voyage, whom they had learned to scorn, is surely one of the most cheering facts in history —not the less cheering because he showed that he had various weaknesses of his time and of his own character to mar his influence, and because his scheme for India had failed and had enfeebled his position. Other questions of the day. In this instance again, in his hearty co-operation with the opponents of the slave trade, and in his efforts for the removal of the disabilities of the Roman Catholics in his own country, he was aiming at what appeared to him the highest national expediency—never separating that expediency from the obligations which are laid upon a nation to do justly, and to make a sacrifice of its own prejudices and pelf for the sake of justice.

Reflections on the French Revolution.

70. It cannot be said in the same sense that he was struggling against the tide when he denounced the French revolution, not only in its progress, but in its commencement. The sermon, indeed, of Dr. Price, which he combated in the beginning of his *Reflections*, might make him sure that he should be struggling against the great body of the Dissenters. Mr. Fox, he knew, agreed with the preacher in thinking that those who supported the English revolution were bound to sympathize with the acts of the Constituent Assembly. Mr. Pitt had made no sign which could show that the champion of parliamentary reform dissented from that opinion. But it might have been foreseen that there were feelings in the aristocratical part of Burke's own body which would respond to his words; and that the king, much as

he hated that school and hated him, would regard him as for once the champion of royalty. As the events with which he saw the revolution was pregnant actually came forth, these feelings became stronger on his side than he could have imagined. Country members who had been used to scrape him down discovered that there was some magic in his speech which might save their lands and beeves. That he deserted a single one of his old maxims, to win the favour of these opponents, no one, we think, who fairly studies his later writings, and compares them with the earlier, having no predilections on the one side or the other to bias him, can seriously affirm. There is in all precisely the same recognition of old institutions, the preservation of which is involved in the existence of a nation; the same dislike of formulas; the same reverence for customs and traditions as significant of relations which cannot be expressed in terms, which belong to the feeling and life of a people, which it is a fearful thing to outrage or undermine; the same stedfast adherence to the doctrines of the year 1688, as they are expressed, not in philosophical apologies, but in such authentic and indisputable documents as the Act of Settlement. Burke's splendid commentary upon the meaning and principle of that Act may be said to give the *coup de grâce* to Locke's defence of it by the dream of an original contract. That unfortunate conception was perishing indeed under the blows of a number of conspirators who had little mutual understanding. If the Cassius of the *Contrat Social* had struck it on one side, a Casca at Cambridge (as we shall find presently), had wounded it cruelly on another. The shade of Locke might have exclaimed, *Et tu Brute*, when the old Whig champion sent his steel into its very heart. But there was an unfortunate halt in Burke's argument when he appealed to the language of Lord Somers as determining the right of William to the throne. Most clearly he showed that that great statesman had recognized no popular election as interfering to put down one monarch and establish another. He could appeal to his very words as showing that a divine sovereignty, and not such a sovereignty as Rousseau imagined, had been recognized as at work when the violator of the constitution and of his coronation oath fell condemned by his own act; when the husband of Mary was accepted, not alone, but with her, as representing the continuousness of the succession to the British crown. The language is clear; but Burke is afraid of it. He cannot push his own argument to its consequences. If he admits an actual dominion of God over the nation, he approaches too near the Puritan or Fifth Monarchy language, which he abhors. He can only regard it as an ingenious religious device of Lord Somers, to conceal the mischief of an apparent interrup-

Their popularity.

Consistency of them with his earlier writings.

The original contract expiring.

Burke afraid to take the words of the Act of Settlement literally.

Consequences of his timidity.

tion in the hereditary line. He thus admits a fiction, or an almost-fiction, at the very ground of the constitution. He supposes the statesman whom he admires most, at a great crisis of the nation's existence, to be playing with fictions. He may possibly have been right, that Lord Somers himself was not quite sure whether he was uttering a truth or only availing himself of a popular machinery. If it was so, he furnished another instance of those who, when a great work is given them to do, become

> "Pious beyond the intention of their thought,
> Devout above the meaning of their will."

An interpreter of the weakness of his party.

He dares not face the facts of his time.

Burke's merit and failure.

That Burke was more than this; that the intention of his thought, the meaning of his will, was devout, we fully believe. That he expressed the falsehood which had been always lurking in the heart of his party, which had weakened its strength for good, which had been the secret of its dishonourable acts, we believe also. It might be hidden, in ordinary declaimers of his school, under pompous phrases and expressions, which might mean many things, or nothing. Burke, by the very superiority of his moral purpose, by the greater clearness of his intellect, was to bring it into manifestation. In a masterly thinker like him it could not be hid. It made him tremble to look for the root of institutions, lest he should find they had no root at all. It made him regard with faithless horror the shaking of that which was diseased and corrupt. It made him untrue to his own deep-seated conviction that what is wrong and unjust in the deeds of nations must come into judgment. It made him tolerant of that mock theocracy of France which could not have been shaken by the scorn of philosophers if it had not first been shaken by its own rottenness—if it had not lain under the sentence of God. It led him to a perilous defence of English institutions, as if they were merely artificial and conventional—not witnesses for those laws which are not of yesterday or to-day, but for ever. It made him, therefore, a prophet of the downfall of that Whiggism of which he had been the most faithful and true champion, because it could not testify to men what was to abide, when fictions could last no longer, when the decree had gone forth that they can sustain nothing. Burke was not inconsistent. The germ of all that was weak and insincere in him lay in his first book. He abandoned neither the good nor the evil which discovers itself there. He was stedfast throughout in his assertion that men cannot ignore their relations to each other, and try to build society upon an abstract foundation, without committing suicide. He was throughout unable to see what is the real substitute for abstract notions—what is that absolute foundation which upholds relations, and which can preserve them even through the tempest of a popular revolution—even when priests, philosophers, and mobs, are each in their own way occupied in destroying them?

Lessons from Burke.

71. We have been so anxious throughout this sketch to connect political with moral philosophy, and to show how difficult it is for all persons—how impossible it is for Englishmen—to contemplate one apart from the other, that we have deemed the writings of Burke as important to our purpose as any that were produced in the eighteenth century. As much as any they seem to indicate the winding up of a period, the passing away of certain modes of thought which had done their work, which could not serve the purposes of a new generation. As much as any they teach the new generation how little it can dispense with the old, how silly and ignorant it must be, how many useless speculations it must exhaust itself with working out, which have been worked out already, if it discards the wisdom of the past, and tries to stand by itself. Burke points out to us more clearly than most, that the Locke age is over, that a new era must begin, which cannot keep as clear of the ocean of Being as he desired that men should. The perplexity of Burke, to which we have just alluded—a perplexity affecting social philosophy and practical life—arose in no slight degree from his dread of that ocean. He would, if possible, look at nothing beyond that which he found established. He would rest only on the firm earth. But the earth was not firm: it rocked and reeled. There must be something above it, or beneath it, or around it. Can we refuse to ask what that is? In another respect Burke was at once marking the limitations of his own inquiries and showing how little those limitations could bind his contemporaries or his successors. He was the masterly investigator of a *Nation's* constitution, of a *Nation's* obligations. He was the masterly protester against every attempt to merge this constitution and these obligations in some general theory which concerned all men equally, no men distinctly. But is there, then, no universal society? Are there, then, no obligations which affect men as men? If Paine, the needleman, cried out that there were "rights of men," and that an "Age of Reason" was beginning for all classes equally, was it enough to answer that these were swinish sounds addressed to the swinish multitude? Was there not a conscience which demanded that if the multitude were swine they should not be left as swine—that there was food, and that the highest food of all, for which they had powers of digestion, for which they might also have an appetite? If Godwin, the bookseller, spoke of a "political justice," was it the best answer which statesmen or divines could give, that there is no such thing as a

The signs of a new time.

Burke in sight of the ocean of Being.

Cry for a universal society.

political justice—that men exist under the doom of increasing and multiplying, and therefore of being depraved and miserable? The young men of that day asked these questions. The French Revolution seemed to promise that an answer might be given to them. The best and noblest of them hailed it most. They counted it a joy to be alive in that moment which was to witness a new birth of things upon their own earth, and "that to be young was very heaven." If they were to wake up after a few years and find it was a dream, was nothing to come of the dream? Was there no substance of which it was the shadow? We are told that hope purifies; must not the loss of hope lead to corruption and debasement? Let us believe that new hopes must spring out of those which perish! Let us be sure that Burke, being a true and enthusiastic man as he was, would not have desired to quench, and was not able to quench, any real enthusiasm. He could give his aid in extinguishing what was false. He could utter warnings concerning the wilderness which men must pass through before they could find the land of promise of which they were in search. He could bid them cast nothing away that had been given them, and expect nothing from what they created out of their own fancies. He could *not* show that there is not a city for men which hath foundations, or that all the cities of the old world and of the new are not to walk in the light of it.

The promises of the French Revolution must not be overlooked, more than its threatenings.

Paley (1743-1805).

72. Whilst Burke was working out his idea of a nation's expediency by hard practical conflicts with its pride and avarice, William Paley was teaching, in the halls of Cambridge, that expediency is the one foundation of moral and political philosophy. It is instructive to compare two doctrines which an equivocal name may easily confound. The laws of honour, the laws of each land, particular customs, above all, the sense of right and wrong in the minds of individuals and nations, were regarded by Burke as demanding reverence—as signs of a principle, if they were ever such inadequate principles in themselves. Paley begins with overthrowing the law of honour, with showing that the law of the land makes no appeal except to the fear of some tangible punishment, or the hope of some tangible reward, with utterly discarding a moral sense. On this dead level he raises his moral edifice. Moral obligation means a motive which is "violent" enough to produce obedience to it. There is no motive sufficiently violent but a self-interest which stretches through an interminable future. Hume was right in supposing that justice and benevolence have no foundation except in utility. Hume was wrong in fancying that a sufficient sense of

The expediency of Paley and that of Burke.

The "violent motive."

What must be added to Hume's utility.

The will of God.

what is useful, and therefore a sufficient motive to be just and benevolent, could be created in men's minds, unless they were promised enormous future rewards if they were just and benevolent, and were threatened with punishment of unmeasured magnitude and duration if they were not. The proclamation of such violent motives is the declaration of the will of God to man. That will is the ground of our duty. When its decrees are formally contained in Scripture we know what is expedient for us to do. When its decrees are not contained in Scripture we must find out as well as we can what is expedient for us. That is the nearest approximation we can in such cases make to a knowledge of the divine will. In all cases expediency, therefore, is the principle with which we are concerned. The question, What will save us from misery here or hereafter, and lead to blessedness here or hereafter? is the only one which we need to set before ourselves.

Political philosophy.

No original contract.

Expediency the rule in private life and public.

The fact of family government recognized.

73. The political philosophy of Paley is ultimately reduced to the same maxim as his moral. But when we trace the steps by which he arrives at his conclusion in this instance, we become better able to perceive the secret of his influence. More distinctly than almost any of his predecessors he perceives that the two spheres must be concentric—that there cannot be a moral principle which is not also a political principle. He sees clearly that a substitute is needed for Locke's doctrine of a contract; that has clearly been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Paley disposes triumphantly of the *ex post facto* argument which had been alleged in support of it from the establishment of the constitution of the United States in his day.. But where was the substitute to be found? Any idea of an implied contract was inconsistent with all Paley's habits of mind. Any dream of a divine covenant, however much suggested by the books to which he appealed as most authoritative, was not applicable to present circumstances. All statesmen, the wise and honest most, felt it their duty to search for expediency. The Scriptures required a recognition of the will of God. Put the two together and you get what you want. Each sustaining the other could supply the place of the abandoned theory. With them as our standing ground we may allow the facts on which Filmer rested his untenable theory. Families did precede nations. There may have been a patriarchal government before there was one of fixed laws. The history of the growth of dominion may be traced historically without resorting to suppositions derived from the fancy. Such a recurrence to facts was promising to Englishmen especially. They were anxious to find a practical ground for political life. What could be so practical as the ground of expediency? Respectable landed

proprietors, magistrates, and lawyers, however, felt that there must be something besides this notion to render it effectual; that the anti-theocratic dogmas of the philosophers would never work in the villages and towns of England. They did not ask that the *hiatus* between the two principles of Paley should be filled up. They found a way of filling it up in the business of life which answered well enough. The terrors of a future state might induce witnesses to lie less outrageously, might be of some use in confirming the authority of the constable. Was not that a sufficient link between the expediency of the state and the will of God? On the whole, no philosophy seemed to meet the circumstances of the time so well as Paley's. None combined so much of the eighteenth century lore with that which appeared indispensable in the traditions of the past. That Cambridge should very quickly have accepted the doctrines which were delivered to a portion of her sons, as a text book for them all, is a fact of great significance. Looked at on one side, it merely tells us what a struggle there was in the schools to combine their old faith with the wisdom of the world. Looked at on another side, it shows us what a need there was for some kind of teaching in the schools which should not be technical, but homely and business-like.

How expediency is to be sustained.

Attractions of Paley's philosophy.

The attraction of Paley himself.

74. For this was, and must for ever remain, the charm of Paley. He is actually without collegiate affectation. He is always in contact with the facts of outward life and nature. He is perfectly frank in confessing what he does not see, and wonderfully clear in bringing before you what he does see. The belief of a conscience—of anything internal—was so weak in him that he could throw it over as not worthy to enter into his calculation. The adaptation of means to ends—in the least things and the greatest—no one had a more exquisite perception of than he. This perception, accompanied with a cordial delight in tracing what seemed to him the useful goodness of the universe; a knowledge of law courts, not earned, like Bentley's, through personal litigation, but from sheer pleasure in tracing the windings and intricacies of evidence false and true; and a style which you recognize as the transparent discovery of a humorous character, simple in itself, yet capable of a certain quaint subtlety; a skill in argument, associated, as it so often is, with a strange credulity as to the force of argument in producing effects which proceed from quite other influences;—these are qualities which might account for Paley's popularity, if there had not been a number of circumstances conspiring in his case, as in Locke's, to make those peculiar qualities, and the use to which he applied them, specially acceptable to his countrymen, or

His freedom from pretence.

His simplicity and subtlety.

at least to that portion of his countrymen which can for a time settle the reputation of authors.

Evidences of Christianity.

They are necessary supplements to the *Philosophy.*

Paley obliged to make miracles the one basis of Christianity,

And human testimony the one proof of miracles.

75. Undoubtedly his *Evidences of Christianity* did much to strengthen the fame of his *Moral Philosophy.* It is quite right that they should be considered together, and in the order in which we have placed them. The *Evidences* are not intelligible without the *Moral and Political Philosophy.* That work makes the other necessary, and also determines what its object and character must be. The ground on which the obligation to personal and social duties rests being the "violent" motive which is created by the promise of future rewards and the threat of future punishments—this promise and this threat being based on the will of God—that will must be ascertained in some very distinct manner. It must be set down in letters; there must be some satisfactory proof that these letters are the utterance of it. The books of Scripture must be shown to be authentic and divine. How can they be shown to be authentic and divine? The moral sense has been dismissed with great contempt already; if we do sanction any appeal to that it must be merely by the way, rather out of deference to a prejudice; the pillars of our argument must be made of altogether different materials; they must be constructed with no reference to any internal witness. The proof that the future rewards and punishments are appended to certain acts by God himself must be a miraculous proof. Whoever cannot dispense with the laws of nature has not the credentials of a divine mission which we demand. That he has dispensed with them can only be ascertained by human testimony. The burthen which is laid upon us is to show that this human testimony is so unexceptionable and indisputable as to be adequate to sustain the belief in the miracles.

Perils of the course he adopted.

Disadvantages of Paley in the conflict with Hume.

76. That Paley was consistent with himself in taking this ground—that the maxims he had already laid down did not allow him to accept any form of evidence except this—should be frankly confessed. But it should also be seriously considered to what risks he was exposing his cause when he did put it on this issue. Hume had just been maintaining that *no* amount of testimony could overreach the improbability of any departure from the laws of nature. Paley did not and could not meet him by attaching another meaning to the laws of nature than that which he attached to them. They were agreed in their opinions on that point. They were both alike pupils in the school of experience. Paley could not say that the miracles of our Lord were not violations of a law, but assertions of a law; it was in the fact of their being violations of a law that their evidence, according to him, consisted. He could not call in divine testi-

mony to help out human testimony; he had discountenanced the notion of anything in man to which that testimony could appeal. Paley could not make the least use of Hume's striking proof of the craving for miracles in all ages and countries; all such facts told against him; his business was to show that no other miracles, except those to which the Bible refers, had any significance. All those mighty consequences which he declared to be involved in the reception or rejection of Christianity were made to turn upon the balance of an argument between a subtle Scotch pleader, who maintained that the improbability of a deviation from the laws of nature could not be surmounted by any weight of evidence, and a subtle English pleader, who maintained that it was possible to gather together such proofs of veracity and correctness in the case of the apostles and evangelists as would make any miracle credible for which they vouched. Does any one seriously think that Paley himself was induced to hold fast that which was so dear to him because he deemed that he had the best in this trial of wits? We may be tolerably sure that any who have come to the discussion, merely considering it as a trial of wits, will suppose that Hume had the better in it. And those who turned to Paley, already possessed with Hume's arguments, if they surrendered their swords, will not have really surrendered them to him. They will have arrived at their belief first; then they may have seen something in Paley's *Evidences* which confirmed their faith. Still more, if, instead of reading Hume, they had been devoting themselves to Gibbon, one can conceive only a tremendous shock from the collision of his statements with those of the divine. The student must have perceived at once that this unbeliever, however he might adopt the cant of the philosophers, was no mere philosophical historian in the Hume and Voltaire sense of the word; that he had devoted intense labour to his task; that he had succeeded in presenting a picture of the past ages such as had not been presented before. He might detect many sophisms in the arguments of his fifteenth and sixteenth chapters. But what are all these arguments to the actual vision of the evils of human society under the Christian dispensation? It is these that give the special pleas for secondary causes their weight. It is these that tempt to the notion that those secondary causes were many of them not divine, but devilish. If that conviction is truly followed out, Gibbon himself will be the best of preachers. He will be the brilliant and eloquent witness for a divine power which has been at work in all ages to counteract the devilish power; which has been stronger to support a righteous kingdom on earth than all evil influences, proceeding from those who call themselves divine ministers, have been to destroy it. But if his

Could this argument decide the battle?

How a student of Hume would be affected by Paley's *Evidences*.

How a student of Gibbon would be affected by Paley.

The continuous miracle of Christ's history.

reasoning and facts are merely brought face to face with arguments, to prove that at a certain moment there was launched into the world, with miraculous sanctions, a religion the outward displays of which, through subsequent ages, have been so mixed, —which has apparently prompted so many evil deeds—the result must be, in a multitude of cases, a negative indifferent scepticism, in not a few, a positive infidelity.

Natural Theology.

77. Paley completed his system of works in 1802, by publishing his *Natural Theology*. He tells the Bishop of Durham, in his dedication, that what was to be read first had appeared last. It contains greater signs than either of his other works of that sense of adaptation and fitness which we have attributed to him; it bears marks of more extensive reading, as well as of a livelier observation. We need not say that its object is to prove that the world had an intelligent artificer. If that is proved, he tells us in his later chapters that we must suppose God to be a Person; that we must attribute to Him a general benevolence. This, it seems to us, is a curious instance of the union of childish faith in the power of argument with a childlike faith in that which is above all argument. Paley believed in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. He had said from his infancy the Lord's Prayer. He *began* with the recognition of a Person. The confession of a great designer fastened itself to that confession. He assumes that the process is reversed. Given a designer, you must accept a person. The answer is one of experience and fact. It lay before him and behind him. The most intelligent naturalists of his day—the men who had seen most of these evidences of design—did *not* rise to the belief of a person; the Father was not there; the Creator could not be detected. What signified it that the watch lay on the road? The watch suggests a watchmaker to those who bring the thought of their own nature with them, who have need of one to whom they can refer themselves; it does not contain in itself the maker; its springs move without him. How much more justice might Paley have done to some of the observations which other naturalists had made—which he himself was obliged to make —if he had remembered this! The idea of *generation* had been supposed to dispense with *creation*. The thought had taken a number of forms. It had mingled with the theology of the earliest Gnostics. It had mingled with the physics of the most modern Frenchmen. Paley may have shown triumphantly that it could not account for all the facts of the universe. But is it not a fact of infinite significance? If it is forgotten, if it is not allowed immense weight, does not creation lose its own sublimity? does it not shrink into mere artifice and contrivance? May not the highest moral and theological truths some day be

The Creator and the Father

Generation and creation.

found necessary to give the full force to a fact which concerns all animal and vegetable natures? And may not the correction of Paley's whole scheme of thought lie in this? When we consider what the books actually say for the authority of which he argued so ingeniously, shall not we find that, according to their plain letter—according to the sense which all Christendom has given them—they mean something altogether different from that which in his philosophy he supposed them to mean; that they are constructed upon the principle of self-sacrifice, not of self-seeking; that they set forth the will of a Father, who holds out to His children the promise of being like Him, and so of being delivered from the selfishness which is their curse and damnation?

Result.

Jeremy Bentham (1747-1832).

78. We are so much in the habit of connecting the name of Jeremy Bentham with our own century that the reader may with difficulty realize the fact that he was born only four years after Paley, and that the book which contains, in his own judgment, the germ of all his moral and political science was written several years before Paley's *Lectures* were delivered. Chronology can never be forgotten with impunity in any record of human thoughts. Not merely the mind of the thinker, but the mind of the age over which he exercised an influence, is misinterpreted, if, through any dream of classifying men according to their opinions, or the subjects upon which they wrote, or the number of their disciples, we overlook the circumstances in which they were educated, those by whom they were surrounded in their early years, the questions which were then most occupying their country.

Bentham's education.

79. In a somewhat garrulous and not very charitable, but amusing and instructive, preface to the second edition of his *Fragment on Government*, Mr. Bentham gives us some valuable glimpses respecting his own history, the occasion which led him to write, the feelings which his book excited among his contemporaries. The son of a solicitor, he had been fond, like Paley, of frequenting the law courts. Of all the advocates to whom he listened Dunning delighted him most by the clearness of his logic and his freedom from flights of imagination. But Bentham had no Whig leanings; he had been a student of Clarendon; his sympathies were with the Stuarts; he respected monarchy and passive obedience. He went into a congenial region; at an early age he became an undergraduate of Queen's College, Oxford. Even at that age he felt painful scruples about subscription to the Articles; his recollection of the struggle never deserted him. Sir William Blackstone was then in the height of his reputation, delivering those lectures as Vinerian professor upon which his fame with posterity rests. Young Bentham

Blackstone.

attended them; tried to extract a coherent sense from them; entirely missed the logic which he had admired in Dunning. The *Commentaries* seemed to him a strange compound of the old Tory doctrine of the dignity and sacredness of the sovereign with the Whig theory of an original contract. The more he considered that theory the more contradictory he found it. Blackstone did not acknowledge an *actual* contract. He only said that one was *implied* in the existence of the rulers and the ruled. A tenable proposition, if he had adhered to it. But he wavered so much in first assuming a natural society, then in denying one; he appealed to Scripture so awkwardly as the witness of a patriarchal foundation for government, then mixed the patriarchal and the legal so inextricably together; he so obviously regarded the King of kings as a mere *Deus ex Machinâ* to cut knots which could not be untied, that the youthful listener found his old remnant of theocratic faith deserting him, and nothing newer or better substituted for it. Where was that newer or better thing to be found? Hume's *Essay on Human Nature* fell in his way. The idea of utility as the solution of all problems in the government of nations and in the life of men dawned upon him. He at once applied it to the exposure of Blackstone's incoherences. The *Fragment upon Government* exhibits the transition of the Oxford Tory into the modern Utilitarian Radical Reformer, just as Paley's philosophy exhibits the formation of the modern Utilitarian Whig out of the old Cambridge Whig of 1688.

Whiggism and Toryism combined.

Conversion of a Tory.

80. The *Fragment* was attributed to several distinguished persons. Dr. Johnson gave it to Dunning—acutely, Bentham remarks, considering his fondness for Dunning's style; but yet stupidly, as might be expected from a dreary ascetic, since Dunning had no historical learning, and the old man cannot but think that, allowing for his years, *he* had displayed a good deal. By whomsoever written, the *Fragment on Government* could not be forgotten. It had laid bare much indifferent reasoning; had shown clearly that on such grounds as Blackstone had set forth society could not stand; that neither monarchy, aristocracy, nor democracy had received any intelligible definition from him; that the English Constitution, the complex of the three, might, as Bentham showed in an elaborate proposition, be proved to be all-powerful + all-honest + all-wise = all-perfect; and by the same process might be shown to be all-weak, all-foolish, all-knavish. But this negative result, however satisfactory to the demonstrator, was not all that he aimed at. Political justice as well as individual morality was traced to Hume's maxim. Blackstone had spoken of the "duty" of the supreme power in the State to make laws. Bentham says he can understand his own

The authorship of the *Fragment.*

The complex of forms of Government.

duty. It is to do that which he will be punished for not doing. But how a supreme power incurs the risk of punishment for not imposing laws he cannot perceive.

Bentham merely as a moralist not disliked.

81. These sentiments were evidently not disagreeable to the illustrious statesmen of the time, Tory or Whig, for any moral reasons. They won for Bentham the constant regard of Lord Shelburne, though he had been the original patron of Blackstone. Wedderburne pronounced them "dangerous," but, considering the character of the man, their author cannot be wrong in interpreting the phrase to mean "dangerous to the legal profession." The dread of other lawyers of more honourable reputation seems to have been early excited towards the denouncer of their celebrated Oxford representative. There were evident indications in the *Fragment on Government* that the writer might become more than a theoretical assertor of utility in its application to jurisprudence. And that unquestionably must be regarded as the main cause of the unpopularity which Bentham drew upon himself, and which became greater as he grew older. He did not carry the mere doctrine of utility farther than Hume or than Paley had carried it. But he used it as neither of them ever dreamed of using it. What meant for Hume "the comfort of the refined classes" was translated by Bentham into "*the greatest happiness of the greatest number.*" If he was asked what happiness meant, and he could only answer *that which gives most pleasure to the greatest number*, moralists might demur to the answer. But if the privileged classes had demurred to it he would have replied, "I mean by happiness what you mean by it. I ask for the multitude the kind of pleasure which you prize most. Is money such a trifle? Why then do you seek it so eagerly?" This was dangerous language undoubtedly. Wedderburne might no doubt say Duty is something more for me than the doing that which I shall be punished for not doing, But he provoked the answer, "What more? What is the high ethical standard to which you appeal, and by which you would like your acts to be tried?" So that when Bentham proceeded to show, in the case of his class especially, how much "sinister interest" had interfered with the public convenience, it was far easier to resort to such phrases as *Stare super antiquas vias*, or *Quieta non movere*, than to invoke principles which Bentham cast aside in words, and which were habitually denied in act.

Bentham dangerous to whom?

Happiness of the greatest number.

The answers to him.

Bentham's services.

82. In so far as Bentham brought these contradictions before the face of those who were committing them we conceive he was doing a service. For men like Blackstone were *not* standing upon the ancient ways; that earth which looked very quiet was just about to be upheaved. If there was a truth which had belonged to the ages of old, and belonged equally to that

generation, it must be felt for and sought for. Probably the earthquake must come before it would be discovered that society had need of such a truth. We cannot think that Bentham would have been more useful if, like Paley, he had adopted a notion about the will of God to help out the weakness of his Utilitarian motives. We rather consider it one of his chief merits that he utterly dispensed with any such aid; that he rejected a divine basis altogether for human society, or for the life of the individual man. That was *the* fair way of bringing the principle which he defended to a test; the only mode of ascertaining whether any society or any man has existed, does exist, or ever will exist without the confession of a Being who does not merely decree what men shall do under the terrors of punishment here or hereafter, but who *is* Righteous, who purposes to set Righteousness on the earth. The acknowledgment of such a Being lay, we believe, deep in the heart of Bentham as in the heart of Paley. The practical labours of the one for what he held to be the best interests of his fellow-creatures, often amidst obloquy and contempt, were witnesses of it. Paley's childlike admiration of what was harmonious and benevolent was the evidence of it in him. Both alike, by that leading tenet which seemed to them so self-evident, so incontrovertible, such a primary axiom in morals and politics, denied the existence of *such* a Being, substituted a notion, generalized from a partial human experience, for the laws which are the expression of His nature and will. Both, therefore, made a science of morals and politics which must rest on such laws, which must expand and exalt human experiences, impossible. We cannot bring the charge more strongly against the lawyer than against the divine; against him who has been suspected of all irreligion, than against the popular and recognized champion of the faith. His influence has been more widely felt than that of most political philosophers, because he was far more persevering in the exposure of particular grievances in countries already organized, far more ingenious in devising possible schemes of legislation and government for those which had been disorganized. He has had numerous scholars in every class and in every country. Many have talked Benthamism all their lives without knowing it, probably while fancying themselves faithful adherents to some other system. That his idea of general happiness, however little we may see to satisfy us either in the name or in the thing which it represents, is more human than Hume's or Paley's we must steadily maintain. And though the temper of Bentham—which always suspects dishonesty even in the men who have given most proofs of zeal for the cause that he had at heart—is

Valuable for his repudiation of theology.

Tacit confession of a righteous Being.

Not more a denier than Paley.

His school.

His bitterness.

a disagreeable contrast to the tranquil, good-humoured tone which was habitual to both these writers, we must make large allowances for the vexations of a reformer bent on his own objects, with unquestioning faith in their worth, with no hope for any good to mankind except from the accomplishment of them. Every one who stood in the way of any purpose in which he believed the greatest happiness of the greatest number to be involved must, he thought, be actuated by some sordid, shameful motive. And he could impute such motives with all the more comfort, and without any conscious diminution of his benevolence, because he did not call any one morally evil, but only attributed to him the same sinister interest to which in similar circumstances he supposed he might himself have yielded. On the whole, it may be better for the sake of tolerance, as well as of truth, to call good good and evil evil, than to invent these clever periphrases which justify a greater amount of rage against individual offenders, and hold out less hope that any one of us may ever avoid the offence. The English constitution, which Bentham identified with Blackstone's representation of it, and therefore treated with the profoundest contempt, we may leave to vindicate itself from its apologists and its impugners. One of the most learned and accomplished disciples of Mr. Bentham, the late Mr. Austin,—who entered more deeply than any man into his idea of jurisprudence, and expounded it more ably,—in his latest work, written in the maturity of his powers, used the very language respecting this constitution which the author of the *Fragment on Government* and his school had denounced as the language of fallacy and platitude.

Professor Austin.

Return to Germany.

83. The prospects of German philosophy, when we took our last glimpse of it, appeared to be far from encouraging. Christian Wolff had encountered the opposition of the Pietists—had won a victory over them—had established his scheme of doctrine in the different universities of his land. How exactly it was contrived to suit the demands of students possessed of untiring diligence, desirous to make the circle of their knowledge complete, impatient to obtain definite and producible results, benevolently inclined to bring different forms of thought into an equitable reconciliation—so that they might claim for their age the glory of threshing the grain out of all former ages, leaving only the chaff—we have endeavoured to indicate. What additional reputation as a representative of free thought, as a martyr to science, the persecution of Wolff procured for him—how one who had many qualities that would have fitted him for a doctor of the Sorbonne found the youth of Germany hailing him as their champion against the arrogance of theologians—has also been

Wolff in his glory.

recorded. And then came that dangerous competitor for these laurels, the witty and graceful Frenchman, to whom Wolff was simply ridiculous, and who taught his royal disciple that he could not advance a step in divine philosophy till he renounced the barbarian doctor, and substituted quite a different kind of encyclopedic wisdom for that which he had inculcated.

The schools faithful to him.

Arguments in his favour

The divines favourable.

84. A system so congenial to the university or professional mind as Wolff's could not be expelled from the home which it had found for itself, because a monarch, however much reverenced for his heroism and his wisdom, had deserted it. Probably it acquired a new attraction for some of those who had adhered to it, and won some converts from those who had dreaded it, after it became exposed to the assaults of French scorn. Was it not a genuine native product? was it not a witness against the flimsy superficial habits with which Paris was likely to infect Berlin? The fervour of Francke's revival had ceased. The Pietists were mingling in the ranks of the orthodox. Had not their fathers suspected Wolff unfairly? His system was highly respectable, soberly religious. It was entirely free from scepticism. Theology had its own faculty, as every other ology had. If they adhered to Wolff's maxim, and profited by Wolff's logic, they might make it a very effectual faculty. Infidels might be kept down. The godless Gaul might be driven out. Christian evidences, and a theory of Christian morals might be happily combined with the study of Nature. The *Belles Lettres* might be allowed their own proper place. Philology and ethnology might be pursued by those whose business it was to pursue them. A general tone of reasonable devotion to art, physics, philosophy, divinity, might be diffused through the schools and through the land. If the cannon of the seven years' war disturbed for awhile the repose of professors, they might soon forget the tumults of nations, and deliver their lectures at the appointed hours.

The coming revolution.

Allusion to Kant.

85. How one of Wolff's own class was appointed to break the quietude of his dogmatism we shall hear presently. But Kant's existence and his work are a marvel which need some other facts to account for them. We shall find that a man born to be a professor, never travelling far from the region of his professorial activity, apparently with the most eminent gifts for speculation, apparently standing altogether aloof from practice, yet became the great witness for the value of practice above speculation. We shall find that a man who consecrated a new uncouth nomenclature to the service of philosophy, who seemed to fence it round with a hedge of thorns which must prohibit the access of all people who had not a university training, nevertheless affected the habits and pursuits of his countrymen in all direc-

tions, and has ultimately had a great influence upon the mind of countries most unlike his own in their habits and pursuits. His influence needs explanation. To explain how this could be we need to consider what efforts other Germans of his time were making to discover some link between books and men. Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, the great contrast to Kant in the clearness of his style, in the general occupations of his life, appears to be the best exponent of this struggle. No doubt he had a contemporary far more Goethe. illustrious than himself. Goethe belongs to the half century of which we are speaking, as well as to our own. There is of course no comparison between his creative powers and those of Lessing. In some respects he might illustrate even better the union of life and letters. But his connection with philosophy is less direct than that of the elder thinker. He marks less exactly the transition from one state of feeling to another. If his experiences were more manifold, and his faculty of making other men partake of them greater, there were special experiences in the case of Lessing which render him a more perfect type of the good and the evil which were working together and fighting for supremacy in his day.

essing (1729-1781). 86. Twenty years intervened between the births of these eminent men. The earliest impressions of the younger were connected with the glories of Frederick II.; his father was a jurist and a man of the world; his first sight was of Frankfort, with its mixture of feudal and commercial grandeur. Lessing His training. was the son of a Lutheran preacher at Kamenz; his earliest discipline was theological; Ernesti at Leipzig was probably the first who turned his thoughts to philosophy, or the study of the old world; but neither Ernesti nor his father could fix his mind to one pursuit or one study. He appears to have roamed over the field of knowledge, seeking everywhere for some spring of life. Might it not be hid beneath the thorns of metaphysics? Might not Wolff know where it was to be found? Studies Wolff. No diligence on Lessing's part was spared to ascertain whether Wolff did know. What he and Leibnitz had said, where he and Leibnitz had differed, was seriously pondered; apparently Lessing accepted their lessons as good for their purpose, and did not discover in them what he wanted. They were perhaps the best philosophers to be found. But he had limbs that were made to be used, a body that craved for use and play. Were not bodily exercises as real, as useful, as free, as the exercise Craving for animal life. of distinguishing ontology from psychology? To discard the latter might be to change the man for the animal; but must not the man and the animal be somehow connected? Must there not be a passage between the pursuits of the senses and the pursuits of the intellect? Was there no way of expressing

The stage.

Lessing's devotion to it.

thoughts in action, and of making thoughts to bear upon action? The stage—was not that something of the kind? It belonged to the old world and to the new; it recognized the power of looks and gestures; it made them the instruments of signifying the deepest human emotions; it translated the thoughts of the closet to the heart of the people. Lessing must try the tones of that instrument. Madame Neuber, the Mrs. Siddons of Germany, must be his teacher. He must study parts written for the stage—even join a company of actors. Not much promise seemed to lie in such tastes: that a Lutheran clergyman should have deplored them, and urged him to betake himself to some settled occupation, was not surprising. Yet if the clergyman had considered what kind of food the theology and philosophy of that time were offering to the hunger of a human spirit, he might have wondered less, if he grieved more, that his son should have sought among actors and actresses—even in games of hazard—for something to still an appetite which they could not quench.

The philosophy of sensation.

Its application to art.

The German and the Frenchman have both tried to solve its problems.

87. It is impossible not to connect this direction of the young German's mind with all that has been said about the philosophy of sensation in former pages. What was a philosophy about sensation good for? If men did receive anything—Locke and his school said they received everything—from sensation why not try to realize a little of that which they received? We have senses; so far are we agreed—Wolffians and Voltairists—German doctors and French epicures. But are the German doctors or the French epicures giving us much light about those senses—the use to which they have been turned—the powers that are latent in them? The actor addresses himself directly to these senses. Is it not the same with those who have stood in close proximity to the actor, the painter, the musician, the poet? Are not they all in a very peculiar manner dealing with sensation? And if so, might we not investigate what that peculiar manner is? what the secret of the influence is which acting, painting, music, poetry, have over us? under what conditions and laws they work? The German, with his metaphysical science, talks of these things. But how do his metaphysics come into contact with them? We are told that certain relations exist between us and outward things. Very well. But we want to know *how* they exist? *what* they are? The Frenchman is a professor of art. He knows all about it. He does not despise the stage, or painting, or music, or poetry. He wishes people generally to occupy themselves with those pursuits. And he can tell exactly upon what rules they should act, paint, sing, make poems. Can he? Is that the way we proceed in the other pursuits in which we boast

The Frenchman not enough a man of the age. that we are better than our fathers? Have we not cast aside rules and definitions in the investigation of nature? Are we not experimental students? Are we to go back to the old method in this study of art? or are we to study works of art just as we study the works of nature, for the sake of finding out what they mean—how they have acquired their authority—why men have confessed them to be mighty or majestical?

Reference to Burke. 88. We have seen how our own Burke first exhibited those tentative habits of mind which were to be his glory as a statesman, in a question of art; how he tried to discover a philosophy that might be a substitute for the taste which every one claimed a right to exercise, and a right to condemn his neighbour for not exercising according to his maxims. That which was clearly not intended to be the sphere of Burke's activity became the first sphere of Lessing's activity. He was to be, in a very high Criticism in a new sense. sense of the word, if not in the highest, a *critic;* in that sense in which it means a discoverer, and not a judge; in which it does not import the assumption of maxims, either stated or concealed, by which a painter or a poet may be tried or condemned; but a search for the principles upon which the great masters in each department have proceeded; for the external circumstances which have determined their mode of managing any subject; for laws which have made the treatment of the same subject by different kinds of artists different; (*e. g.*, why the description in the second book of Virgil should not strictly correspond to the Laocoon of the sculptor.) To this inquiry Lessing brought all the critical experience and quickness of perception which he had acquired in the world. But he did not allow that ex- Use of the ancients to the moderns. perience to be the measure of any great work. He perceived in the practice of those whose works had survived through ages, that which went far beyond his experience—that which corrected and explained it. The Greeks may not have been infallible guides in art. There were circumstances in their condition which do not exist in ours, and, therefore, which would make many of their external practices utterly unsuitable to us. The serious study of them will preserve us from servile imitation, instead of promoting it. But mankind has recognized in them something which we are bound to admire, from which we are to learn. Instead of setting aside that judgment, we should seek for the grounds of it; so we may be saved from the erecting our own canons into laws of the universe; so our own practice will not every day become more degraded because we fancy it to be most exalted.

Principles involved in the criticism. 89. Since a criticism of this kind could not gain ground in the one department of art without affecting every subject about which men think, we may do well to consider for a moment what is involved in the adoption of it. Some of its consequences seem at first sight contradictory; the inconsistency vanishes when we look more closely into them. (1.) The distinction between science and art has always been strongly asserted both in books of philosophy and in popular opinion. The criticism of Lessing recognizes this distinction in its fullest extent. Thus, for instance, in his *Laocoon,* he says that it was perfectly reasonable for the Greeks to make laws for the encouragement of a beautiful kind of art, and the discouragement of a deformed kind, because the object of art is enjoyment, and the lawgiver may prescribe what enjoyments are salutary to a people, what mischievous; whereas the object of science is truth, and it is tyranny to put the least violence upon the effort to satisfy an essential demand of the soul. He felt the distance between these provinces to be so wide that, in one of his earlier works, he objected to the *Essay on Man* as necessarily sacrificing poetry to metaphysics, or metaphysics to poetry. His criticism being suggested by a question of the Berlin Academy, whether the system upon which Pope grounds his optimism is defensible or not, Lessing goes very carefully into an examination of the passage, "whatever is, is right," and then into an examination of Leibnitz and the other assertors of a best possible world. Very skilfully, though not always, we think, with perfect fairness, he argues that Pope did not know what he meant by his doctrine, and was merely mingling in verse the shreds of a number of different, often contradictory, systems. In the course of his remarks he even expresses his opinion that Lucretius has not written a poem, though he has mixed much fine poetry with an imperfect attempt to expound the doctrine of Epicurus. (2.) But though science and art stand thus in contrast to each other, all Lessing's doctrines imply that there is a *science of art*—a way, that is to say, of testing the adherence of an artist to his own object. In other words, he supposes that the study of beauty is an actual study which may be pursued, and that the apprehension of beauty is as capable of cultivation as the apprehension of truth. (3.) There was implied in his criticism a reverence for antiquity which seemed to justify the devotion that had been paid to Greek and Roman literature in the schools of Christendom; and to set at naught the objections to the existing education which had been gaining ground in France and England. But, (4.) On the other hand, so far as this criticism introduced a more diligent study of objects that are presented to the senses—of statues or pictures—so far it was in sympathy with the complaints which had been made by Rousseau and others, that the teaching of children was literary and logical, and did not recognize their sympathies with the outward world. (5.) The criticism of

Science and Art.

Laocoon, § 2; Lessing's *Sämmtliche; Werke,* 3. Carlsruhe. 1824. Wir lachen wenn wir hören, &c.

Pope, Ein Metaphysiker (written in 1755); *Werke,* vol. 23, pp. 1-62.

Art has a science of its own.

Classical education.

How modified.

Romanism.

Protestantism.

Lessing had, in this last sense, what some would call a Romanist, and some a Pagan side. It cultivated the study of visible forms; it led men to search for a meaning in these forms, and to attach to them a much greater worth than had been ordinarily attached to them in Protestant countries. But, (6.) On the other hand, there was in the very nature of this criticism a strong Protestant element. It was essentially discriminating, if it was also reverent and receptive. It confessed the worth of everything that was beautiful wherever it was found; but it inquired what constituted the beauty? what share men had in producing it? what corrupt notions of theirs might tend to disfigure or destroy it?

Æsthetics.

90. We believe we are right in connecting all the German movement of this time primarily with these thoughts about æsthetics. The very name was beginning now, for the first time, to be current among Germans; Kant claims the invention or restoration of it for them. It is significant in many ways. Whatever the Germans spoke of, they were sure to find a scholastic word for it, to associate it in some way with the learning of books. But, on the other hand, those who had been chained by that learning—to whom it had become merely dead—began to connect it with what was passing about them—with the things that they saw. Life began to throb through the letters; men began to look out of the folios. Lessing represents to us exactly this process. Winckelmann and others might have written instructively, even affectionately, about ancient art; but he seems to have made it present to the minds of his countrymen, to have brought them face to face with it. Learning became to him no cumbrous panoply; it was a light armour which he carried without the least effort, which he could unite with wit and ridicule as well as any Frenchman. Yet it was evidently genuine learning. If he touched the subject of which he spoke ever so lightly, he showed that he had looked into it; that he was not content with the outward signs; he must compel them to give out their signification.

Philology.

91. Such a man was sure to contribute as much to the philological studies as to the æsthetical studies of his countrymen: he would carry the same kind of criticism into both. He would seek for the force and life of words, not chiefly for their sound, or for the mere statistics of their use: he would desire to penetrate through historical records to the facts which they set forth, through the facts to the principles which they embodied. He would be therefore in all respects an antagonist of the French school, however much he might admire its facility and gracefulness—however much he might prefer these to the cumbrousness and dryness of his own people. Those who cultivated the

French habit of mind were so quickly provided with formulas for explaining all facts, that inquiry into them, even into the evidence for them, was needless. Those which *looked* strange, which had a supernatural air, were to be cast aside as simply and on the face of them absurd. Such as came recommended by witnesses whom they did not suspect of any theocratical bias might be swallowed whole. All criticism was of the easy, airy kind which we have seen Voltaire adopting in his letters upon Locke, which he applied with equal cleverness to pagan writers and to sacred, to the demon of Socrates and to the conversion of St. Paul. Lessing's mind was sceptical in quite a different sense from this. He questioned evidence severely. A prevarication was likely to fare ill in his hands. He was not much more patient of folly than of roguery. But he would often suspect roguery and perceive folly in persons upon whom Voltaire would have poured forth his finest praises: he would not seldom have recognized truthfulness, and even the higher kind of wisdom, in those who provoked Voltaire's most cutting laughter. It was so in most regions on which the wits of both were exercised. Some have thought that it was not so in their treatment of those questions in which humble people feel most interest. German theologians affirmed that the criticism of Lessing, when it approached their topics, was not essentially different from the criticism of Voltaire; that the results to which it conducted were equally fatal to the authority of the divine records; that it appealed to a superior class of minds; that ultimately it might work a mischief on those minds which the more superficial ridicule could not work.

The French scepticism very partial.

Lessing's scepticism.

Its application to sacred subjects.

92. If we did not believe in the divinity and power of those records, we should easily acquiesce in the last of these conclusions. For we conceive the doubts which Lessing felt and expressed about them must have affected thoughtful men far more powerfully than the scoffs of those who came to them with an inclination to disbelieve—who were already prepared with their conclusions, and only wanted plausible arguments by which to establish them. In all Lessing's restless life he had never lost the effects of his early Lutheran education. What he had seen and felt in the world conflicted in many ways with what he had received in his childhood. But it did not make him less desirous of a childlike faith. He complained of the obstacles which the theological dogmatism of his day opposed to such a faith. He had become conscious of wants as a man which seemed not to be met by that which he was told to receive as a gift from Heaven. No doubt his sharp critical insight appeared to those who were arguing in defence of what they supposed to be orthodoxy, the mere result of an inclination to dispute and to deny.

Whether it was really dangerous to them.

His impatience of theologians.

It really proceeded far oftener from impatience and weariness of argumentation, when a simple confession of faith, above all, a simple and loving life, would have vanquished him, and made him thankful to be vanquished. If divines trusted in their own wonderful subtlety in handling proofs and evidences, he was tempted—partly perhaps by the vanity of power, much more by an inward conviction that that was not the way of making a message which had been delivered by fishermen to the poor of the earth effectual—to try whether his subtlety was not at least as great as theirs. If he fancied he was striking at the heart and substance of the message which they delivered, he recoiled, not from fear of consequences to himself, but through dread of damaging any truth. He even submitted to the reproach of inconsistency, making himself suspected by his freethinking friends as well as by their opponents. There was danger, no doubt, to himself, as well as to his readers, in such a state of mind. At times he would transfer his doctrines respecting art to the province which he so carefully distinguished from it. He would almost say that it did not signify whether a thing was true, provided it produced a moral effect. And then again, his passion for truth, alarmed at this approach to insincerity, would lead him to suspect the historical testimonies to that which had done good. Was not its ideal worth a sufficient explanation of its power? Had not we a right to treat the history with more severity than we should apply to any other, because it *might* be invented to fit the results which had proceeded from it?

His semi-idealism.

The *Wolfenbuttel Fragments*.

93. The papers which Lessing published as *Wolfenbuttel Fragments* were for some time attributed to himself. There was nothing in his previous or his subsequent history to make it probable that he would have shrunk from the responsibility of owning them if they had been his own composition. They are now known to have been notes written by Reimarus, an accomplished man, who resembled in most respects the English deists, but who added to their belief in a purely natural religion a very extensive acquaintance with Hebrew antiquities. The doubts which suggested themselves to such a man were, Lessing imagined, common to him with many laymen and many divines of the day. He supposed that it was desirable they should be exposed to the light, and fairly sifted. Evidently they had taken great hold of his own mind. Yet it is also clear that he would have been glad to find some satisfaction upon them, and that, in many points, his judgment and the author's did not coincide. For instance, Reimarus maintained that the old proselytes of the gate in the Jewish community were a class of pure theists, who were allowed to enter into fellowship with the children of Abraham merely in that character. He supposes that there might be

Lessing's sympathy with the author.

Theory of Comprehension.

a like comprehension in a Christian church—that many inquiring spirits of that day might profit by it, and be admitted to a common worship. The thought seems to have worked powerfully upon Lessing, though he is far from accepting either the historical assumption, or of seeing his way to the modern application of it. He says modestly that his Hebrew lore does not qualify him for pronouncing on the one point. And he is puzzled how to define the *theist*—what the term exactly means; how, if he was a pure naturalist, he could take part in the worship of the Christian God; whether under a common name there might not lurk two opposite meanings. At the same time, if there could be some real fellowship, not grounded upon mere coincidence of opinion on the points of Christian divinity, it would have a great charm and worth for him. Various questions had occurred to Reimarus respecting the miracles of the New Testament. They took this form in the mind of Lessing: Had I seen these miracles, I should have bowed to him who performed them; I should have accepted his words as authoritative and mighty. But can I receive the mere records of them as mighty in the same sense, supposing I believe them ever so much? I may accept the record of a miracle as I accept the record of another fact; I may hold that Lazarus was raised as I hold that Alexander conquered Darius. But I do not know how to build a faith upon the one record or the other. There ought, it seems to me, to be another ground than this for believing in a Son of God.

How Lessing thought of miracles.

94. Such statements seemed, and could not but seem, to the German divines utterly destructive. They supposed that they held fast the Lutheran faith because they believed that the records which spoke of Christ as having appeared in the world seventeen centuries before their time could be defended by a fair amount of probable proofs. They forgot that Luther spoke of a Christ who lived in his day as much as in the days of the Apostles; that he declared such a Christ to be the object of his own trust and hope, and held Him forth as an object of trust and hope to all who heard him. The Bible was for him the witness to the people of Saxony, as to the people of Judea, of a rock which had stood for all generations, and would stand for all generations to come. When Lessing cried for some bond of union between man and man; when he saw clearly enough that the mere confession of *a* God, who might be a mere world-mechanist, could not be such a bond; when he murmured that no records of facts that had passed centuries ago were a foundation for his life; they could not understand that he was more truly a Lutheran than they were—that he needed a living person, while they were content with a lifeless tradition. They

The Lutherans of the eighteenth century.

The Luther of the sixteenth century.

Fighting for remains.

The hope from Lessing's doubts.

could not interpret his needs—he could not interpret those needs. It seemed to them—it often seemed to him—as if he were robbing them of the little in heaven and earth which was left for them. To fight manfully for those relics with any armour they had, or could procure, was a duty and a virtue. But Protestant relics cannot work miracles. What is to be hoped is, that after an indignant demand of antiquaries, who are not only antiquaries, Where is the breath gone which once dwelt in these? there might come a shaking of the dry bones; there might enter into them a spirit from God; they might start up again a mighty army. Those who hold that the old faith *was* true, that the old record *was* inspired, could not doubt that such would be the final result, however long and dreary the processes which were leading to it. Lessing might not foresee what this result would be—there were moments when he might not have desired it. But he had at times, we conceive, strange glimpses of a truth which would do much more than satisfy his perplexities, which might bring humanity and theology into a real harmony.

Nathan der Weise.

95. Some of these glimpses might be found in his dramas, especially in that *Nathan the Wise*, which was the last of them. But, in speaking of these, his countrymen are wont to console our national vanity by telling us that he fell into the very fault with which he had charged Pope, using his poetry, not for what he believed to be its legitimate purpose, but for the inculcation of moral or metaphysical maxims that could have been better delivered and defended in prose. We would, therefore, turn rather to two of his later writings—his *Dialogues on Freemasonry* and his *Education of the Human Race.* If the former only concerned the subject which nominally called them forth, they would have been full of interest for the time in which they were written. The hints they contain are even more valuable for our own. Whilst he sets forth the grandeur and preciousness of civic life; whilst he shows that its necessary limitations, and the strifes between nations, demand something deeper and more universal than itself; whilst he makes us feel that this deeper and more universal truth must be a SOCIETY and must also be a MYSTERY; whilst he proves that it cannot be expressed or described in words—that its power must be manifested in acts—that its power *has* been so manifested in all periods—Lessing leads us into the profoundest problems of political life—into *the* problem of it; and his suggestion of the way in which it might be or must be solved is worth more than a multitude of formal statements and elaborate systems. But when Ernst, smitten with the idea of freemasonry, which he thinks he has discovered in the conversa-

Ernst und Falk. Gespräche fur Freimaürer, 1778; *Werke*, vol. 23, pp. 77-156.

The principles of freemasonry.

The actual freemasonry.

tion of the initiated Falk, rushes forth to join a lodge, in which he expects to find a perfect brotherhood, where there will be no distinctions of race, of class, of faith; when he comes back crestfallen and almost heartbroken, complaining that he has been deceived—that he has seen none of that equality which he had been promised; that in the lodge there is the old clinging of Westphalians to Westphalians, of Christians to Christians, of Jews to Jews, a decided respect for Counts, and no slight scorn of shoemakers—that, in fact, all the divisions of the outer world are reappearing in the charmed circle; and when Falk, smiles at the blunder which his friend has committed in supposing that freemasonry and lodges have anything to do with each other, or that he should be the least nearer to the principle by accepting the badges; we become aware that Lessing is speaking a parable, which it behoves those to hear who may never have entered a lodge or cared to enter one. There is no attempt to conceal the double sense of the dialogues, though we should feel it less, and not more, if we supposed the parts of them which refer to masons and to our Sir Christopher Wren were mere drapery instead of being essential to the design.

The parable

Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts; Werke, vol. 24, pp. 42-92.

96. Less interesting, we think, in itself, less rich in thoughts and suggestions for the time that was coming to Europe, but more valuable for the personal life of Lessing, is that last work to which he put his hand, *On the Education of the Race.* The title has become familiar to our ears; to Lessing's contemporaries it sounded novel and strange. The Bible had become in their minds so separated from the God of whom it spoke—what they called the Word of God meant so strictly a Word which had ceased to be spoken, and had become a printed book—that anything which reminded them of an actual Teacher was startling, even terrific to them. Surely it was a salutary terror! If a layman, throwing aside technical and conventional phraseology, found himself naturally dropping into this mode of speech, what a sign was this of the verity, the permanent verity, of those records which assume throughout a living Ruler and Guide, which never for a moment suppose Him to be silent, or men to be capable, with all their efforts, of shutting out his voice! That Lessing only half recognized the import of his own expression may be true; that his doctrine would have been more, not less, satisfactory to the conscience of men—more, not less, comprehensive of the history of all the nations of the old world—more, not less, explanatory of the time since the records of Scripture closed—if he had taken not one part of St. Paul's lesson respecting the schoolmaster, but the whole of it, if he had grasped his idea of a "fullness of the time," of an admission of all kindreds

Lessing recals us to the maxim of the Scriptures.

Blank in his statements.

into the privileges of the Father's house, into the title and glory of children; we may readily admit. That throughout his discourse we feel a longing to be told how the education of the race coincides with the education of each individual in the race, and are ready to enter a protest on behalf of our own childhood and boyhood and manhood, and the childhood and boyhood and manhood of the nations now, which cannot be satisfied with the announcement that the education they require was given and done with some millenium or two ago; and that if there could be a harmony between the all and the each—if one was not to be sacrificed to the other—if nothing was left behind, but every step in growth was a recovery of the past rather than a loss of it—we should have a much greater assurance that the education of the race is indeed conducted by One to whom nothing is great, nothing little—who does not less "providently cater for the sparrows" because He governs the armies of heaven and earth; may be asserted with even greater confidence. But what gratitude do we owe to the man who awakens the thought in us which enables us to detect these weaknesses and to raise these objections! How evidently he has taken us into a region in which we become conscious of the inadequacy of all our theories, in which we are sure that we must be always learners, because we shall never be without a perfect Teacher! How much Lessing's various experiences of himself and of his fellow-creatures have brought him to perceive the necessity of such a Teacher—how much they have humbled him—we may gather from the touching and pathetic manner in which he feels again after the old faith of his childhood, in which he discovers that there may be a practical meaning in the mysteries which both he and his orthodox opponents—they more than he—had relegated into the region of dry dogmas having no relation to human life. His interpretation of those mysteries may give very imperfect contentment to the reader; we shall find hereafter that it did not give contentment to himself. He was catching hold, if only by the hem of the garment, of that which he was sure must be divine, and must be good for him and for all men to apprehend. Hereafter all such explanations might be produced as fine philosophical substitutes for, and refinements upon, the ordinary faith of mankind. To Lessing, unless we are greatly mistaken, they were not such, or were such only in moments of vanity and weakness to which every man is liable. He certainly never professed more than he believed, or so much as he believed; but he was continually discovering the necessity of a belief, and discovering that it must be a belief in One who had awakened it, and could give it its right direction, its full expansion. Therefore, his life excites an in-

The individual and the body.

Great value of his hint.

His perception of a practical sense in the Christian mysteries.

Lessing's faith.

His services to Germany.

terest which his various and exquisite gifts, unaccompanied by such a purpose, could not impart to it. When we can the least hold him forth as a model, when he was most erratic in his course, we can see that he was a subject of that education which he claimed for his race. And we cannot but think that he was acting as a minister in the education of his countrymen; leading them away from the passion for systems, built or to be built, which had proved so fatal to their best energies and aspirations; showing how they might be true searchers after wisdom, even if they were unable by any efforts of their own to find it.

Kant (1724-1804).

97. Immanuel Kant was born five years before Lessing. During much of Lessing's life he was exerting a powerful influence over his classes at Königsberg, and through them on Germany. But it was not till the year after Lessing's death, in his own fifty-seventh year, that Kant's great work appeared, that which laid the foundations of his philosophy, and upon which all his subsequent works depend. Nor can the influences which Lessing may have known of, and perhaps participated in, have been exactly of the same kind with those which have proceeded from his writings. The reports that reach us of his lectures represent him as a teacher with an unusual power of making the subjects which he handled lively and interesting, drawing illustrations from travels, novels, almost every kind of literature; possessing no slight amount of humour; capable of entertaining a company, even of keeping the table in a roar with his jests, while he preserved himself an unshaken gravity. A skilful diviner might perhaps conjecture these qualities from his books, but it must be a diviner who has learnt from experience that an author is often the very reverse of that which he appears. An ordinary commentator, who has the advantage of knowing what is told by credible witnesses of Kant, would arrive at the conclusion that he possessed a most remarkable gift of repressing his natural inclinations when he supposed that the indulgence of them would interfere with his objects. That one who had given proofs of metaphysical precocity in his youth should have kept back the publication of his most important thoughts till he was approaching old age, and should then have presented them in the driest, hardest form, is a sign how much importance he attached to them—how little he supposed that they required any adventitious aid—how certain he was that they were to be uttered, and would sooner or later make their power felt. He must have had an unusually strong assurance that his method would meet the special exigencies of the time; that he could do the world a service in the way which it least expected; that his dialect, however obscure in form, would ultimately scatter mists instead of

Kant the oral teacher.

Kant the writer.

His confidence in his own work.

raising them. His faith in his Critical Philosophy might at times be superstitious; he might suppose that all the past thinkings and strivings of the world had only been permitted that they might bring it forth. But he never, like Hobbes, deemed that all who had grappled with philosophical questions before him were fools or knaves. He supposed that he was born to set them right, and he did not consider it any cursed spite that that task had devolved upon him. There must be one philosophy, he said, as well as one true morality. Mine is the philosophy; I have no doubt of it. I should not bring it forth if I had. Less confidence would not have sufficed for him. The counteraction to it lay in the nature of the philosophy itself. It was critical, not dogmatical. It was occupied to a very great extent in pointing out what the philosopher could not do; what are the restraints upon his speculations; into what regions they must not penetrate.

See the Preface to his *Metaphysik der Sitten*, p. vi.

The critical and the transcendental.

98. It is unfortunate for Kant's reputation in England that the epithet "transcendental" has been much more associated with his philosophy than the epithet "critical;" and that the reasons which led him to adopt the former word have not been considered in the light of the latter. The notion that Kant was, in some sense, reversing the decrees of Locke, by bringing in *à priori* truths, has blinded us to the fact that the German had even a greater horror than the Englishman of that "ocean" which he forbade us to approach. At the end of a century Kant uses words curiously developed and expanded out of those which we have taken as the key words to the *Essay on the Human Understanding*. Locke's timid hint at a metaphor has grown wonderfully, but the principle is strictly preserved. Kant's great desire is to give it effect. Locke, it seems to him, has not guarded the coast effectually; other precautions, perhaps other fortresses and batteries, are necessary.

Der transcendentalen Doctrin der Urtheilskraft, 3d Haupstück Kritik, p. 214, Leipzig, 1828.

99. The passage to which we allude occurs in that division of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* which explains the ground of the distinction of all objects into Phenomena and Noumena. "We have now," he says, "not only travelled through the whole country of the pure understanding, and carefully observed every part of it; we have also thoroughly measured it out, and have assigned to everything therein its proper place. But this country is an island, and by its very nature is enclosed within unchangeable boundaries. It is the country of truth (an inspiring name), surrounded by a wide and stormy ocean, the especial abode of phantoms (des Scheins), where many a bank of mist and much ice, soon to melt away, holds out the lying promise of new regions; and while it perpetually deceives the roaming seafarer with the vain hope of

The stormy ocean, and the banks of mist.

discoveries, continually entangles him in adventures from which he can never get loose, and which he can never bring to any result. Before we venture upon this sea, in order to examine it thoroughly in all latitudes, and to assure ourselves whether there is anything to hope in it, it will be useful first to throw back a glance upon the chart of the country that we are inclined to leave behind, and seriously to ask ourselves, *first*, Whether we may not be well contented with what is contained within it, or, at all events, whether we *must* not, of necessity, be content with it, seeing that there is actually no other ground upon which we can build any home for ourselves; and then, *secondly*, Under what title we possess even *this* country, and can hold it in security against all hostile claims." This half-poetical extract would be a most unfair specimen of Kant's ordinary style. If the reader were tempted by it to venture upon the study of his writings, it would scarcely deceive them less than "the bank of mists and the melting ice" deceives the sailor of whom we have heard. We have not chosen it for any such dishonest purpose, but simply to show the disciple of Locke, *first*, That Kant, like his English predecessor, wishes to investigate the understanding itself, and despairs of any knowledge of other things without that preliminary inquiry; *secondly*, That he is as afraid of transgressing the boundaries of the understanding, and has at least as severe notions of what these boundaries are, as that predecessor, or as any one who has walked most warily in his steps. The language of the German about travelling through the whole region which Locke wished to explore, and ascertaining the place of everything that is in it, might, no doubt, have sounded audacious to one who had so modest a belief in his own powers of investigation as Locke. But the presumption may surely be forgiven for the sake of its object. If ontologists and theologians can be kept at a distance by subsidizing a German philosopher, is not a little expense well bestowed and a little dignity well sacrificed to obtain his services?

Kant more fearful of ontological exercises than Locke.

Kant's place for everything utterly unlike Wolff's.

100. But why was it necessary to undertake the long journey which has been described to us? Had nothing been done already in assigning to each part of the mind its place? Wolff, we have heard, had a place for everything in his system. No subject upon which the mind of man had been exercised was left out; above all, the mind itself had been surveyed, and a map or mercator's projection of it made with much diligence. What more was to be done? All this, in Kant's judgment, had to be undone. The Wolfian arrangements seemed to him grounded on no examination; mere wilful decrees in which presumptions of the understanding and deductions from experience were mingled confusedly together; partial generaliza-

Need of a critical philosophy.

tions being taken for universal and necessary laws; and, again, the observations being perverted and overshadowed by *à priori* conceptions. Hence arose the need of a critical philosophy. What were these *à priori* maxims which were thus thrusting themselves between us and the objects with which we desire to converse? Can we get rid of them by ignoring them? If we do, they will have their revenge. They will not cease to affect us because we shut our eyes to them. The whole world of sense becomes darkened by them if we do not ascertain their functions, and prohibit them from performing any which are not theirs.

Kant on Hume.

Das alle unsere Erkenntniss mit der Erfahrung anfange daran ist gar kein Zwifel, are the opening words of the *Kritik*.

Hume's attempt to distinguish mathematics from other studies.

101. It was not, then, from any desire to overthrow the doctrine of Hume respecting experience, that Kant entered upon his task. Hume he had hailed as a benefactor. His clear statement of the claims of experience—the perplexities in which he had involved those who tried to find principles beyond experience within the region of experience—helped to deliver Kant from the bonds of the Wolfian dogmatism, to show him that it must be unsatisfactory and untenable. But then he was obliged to proceed—in the interest of experience, for the sake of testing its full powers—to ask what was implied in it, how it was possible? That all our knowledge begins from experience Kant has no doubt. That is with him a starting-point. The capacity of knowing is aroused by objects that present themselves to our senses; the materials of knowledge are the impressions made on our senses; the exercises of separating, uniting, comparing the impressions, constitute what we call experience. How can there be any knowledge anterior to that? But though all begins *with* experience, does all spring *from* it? How *do* we get any experience? How *can* we get any experience? Are there not some conditions under which we get it? Whence come those conditions? Does experience give them? Twist the question as you will, shrink from the confession as you may, are not these *à priori* conditions? Are they not involved in the very nature of the mind itself? In what perplexities did Hume's refusal to admit such conditions involve him! He must draw a distinction between mathematical evidence and that which concerns observations of matters of fact. What right has he to such a distinction, if his maxim, in its exclusive sense, is true? Is not it simply an arbitrary one, so long as experience is recognized as the source from which all knowledge is derived? Grant the fact that there are conditions in our minds which make certain conclusions inevitable and universal, and you have the difference which he was constrained inconsistently to allow. The conclusions which you deduce from experience respecting matters of facts may be very likely; they may be

grounded upon a number of observations; but there will be a radical, genuine difference between such conclusions and those of geometry.

Sifting experiences.

Space.

A condition of our minds

Time.

102. If so, we must be able to sift these experiences, to see what they contain which they did not bring. Such a sifting has become indispensable. Our inquiries have been pushed too far—the assertions of those who believe that the senses are the sole sources of knowledge are too decided—even if the assertions of those who talked of innate ideas before them had not been equally decided—to admit of a loose compromise, of an assertion that possibly there may be something in the mind besides or above experience. We must resolutely ask ourselves what is it? We shall be haunted by endless delusions if we do not. Examine, then, any body which your senses present to you. Consider all that you have learnt from your experience of its hardness, softness, its rest or its motion. Is that all you have to tell us? No. You say that that body occupies a certain *space*. You say that this is true, not of some bodies, but of all bodies. But has any experience you have about bodies led you to this conclusion? Have your senses led you to it? They say nothing of space, however much they may tell you of that which is seen in space. What is this space, then? Is it not precisely one of those *à priori* conditions of our mind which have tormented metaphysicians so much, which have mixed themselves so much with our plain observations of facts? We have been throwing space outside of us—trying to find it in the things. We cannot find it in them. The more we strain our eyes to look, the more utterly we are baffled. It must be in us. It must be our mode of contemplating certain objects. We can only see them under that limitation, because it is the limitation of our intellects—the terms under which we become capable of experiencing anything—not the product of our experience. Is it otherwise with *time?* We contemplate facts in succession. Can we say that the succession is in the facts or belongs to them? Do we not fall into perpetual confusions if we think so, or if we endue time with an independent existence? What can it be, then, but another of those *à priori* conditions which determine the way in which we shall contemplate the things that are presented to us from without?

Consolation to the worshippers of Locke.

103. It is impossible not to sympathize with the nervous anxiety of a disciple in the Locke school when he first hears of an *à priori* principle. Once admit that, he cries in the first moment of horror, and all is lost. But is not his alarm greatly mitigated when he finds what these principles are? nothing which carries him beyond the *flammantia mœnia mundi,* but exactly what confines him within them; terrible restraints

upon the liberty which men have longed for; not encouragements or permissions to break loose. I look upon time and space as without me. I may begin to dream of a world to which they are not attached. I may think that I know some way of climbing into that world. But if they are about me at every instant; if they check my breathing; if they will not let me see or know anything without their intervention, what escape have I? Must not that which lies beyond, then, be that phantom region—that land of mist or melting ice—which attracts so many travellers, and destroys so many? Our stern doctor understands perfectly well this consequence of his doctrine. He enforces it; if he can have his way, he will not let any of us shrink from it. Whether that is the *ultimate* result of his teachings we shall learn hereafter. So far as we have gone, it seems to be the result of them. The way is blocked on all sides; and we shall find that it is to be blocked still more. Those who deny that a spiritual or an eternal world can have anything to do with man may boast in this part of his treatise, and through many parts of it of which we have not yet had a glimpse, that they never had such a champion as Kant; that all English and French assertors of the visible as the only proper or possible sphere of our thoughts and hopes have stopped far short of him.

Kant's doctrine seems to cut off the possibility of fellowship with a world not under these conditions.

Kant does full justice to the popular doctrine of sensation.

104. The disciple of Locke should also remember—and this reflection cannot but increase his charity towards an old enemy—that Kant, in his effort to give everything a place, clearly accords the *first* place to æsthetics—in other words, to sensation. He accepts the English and French teachings of his day, like Lessing and others of his countrymen; he only exhorts the defenders of sensation to be true to themselves; to let us have the full benefit of their discoveries; not to suffer the formulas of logic or mere traditional dogmas to interfere with them. The distinction between the region of æsthetics, which occupies Kant in the first section of his work, and that of logic, which is the subject of his second, is one of the most important in the critical philosophy. All had felt and confessed that there must be such a distinction. The logician was harassed by the intrusion of partial observations and experiences among his general forms; the observer of nature had been obliged to seek a method for shaking himself free from the insulting interruption of the logician in the midst of his experiments. But nothing could come out of a mere artificial division of their provinces. Those who acknowledged nothing besides sensible experience, at once claimed the logician as their child, and treated him with unnatural contempt and cruelty. It was necessary for the peace of the world that his position should be ascertained; that he

Sense and logic.

should be enabled to hold his own; that he should not be allowed to invade the naturalist or the artist in their rightful work. Kant addresses himself to this task. No one was so fitted for it. No one had a better right to speak on behalf of logic, for it would be difficult to find a more acute and stern logician. No one was more certain to lay bare its unfair pretensions, to find out when it aimed at proving, what it could not prove, or took advantage of an ill-gotten premiss; for his special vocation was to prevent such frauds; it belonged to his critical faculty.

Kant's logic.

Things not known in themselves.

105. Before we pass to this second subject, let us make sure how much we have gained in the first. We have been learning what are the conditions under which we contemplate the objects which present themselves to our senses. We have separated those conditions which belong to our minds from the objects. Have we then discovered a way of knowing these objects in themselves? By no means. We only know the appearances which they present to us. Nor can we ever hope, by any improved *mechanical* contrivances, by any *intellectual* contrivances, to pierce this veil, to pass from the appearance to the thing itself. We may say that the rainbow is only an appearance; that the rain is the thing. Physically this is true; in a higher, stricter sense the rain is as much an appearance as the rainbow. It is a most unfair representation of this doctrine, Kant says, to say that it changes things into appearances. The things are, however we see them. Berkeley fell into the mistake of making them unsubstantial precisely because he mingled them with space and time, which he was sure could have no substance. Transfer them to their proper place in the mind itself, and all you are then obliged to affirm is, that these conditions so necessarily determine your perception of the things that it can never reach to their nature. So far Kant's idealism is more moderate than what he supposed to be Berkeley's; but he deduced conclusions from it respecting the precariousness of the arguments of natural theologians to which Berkeley would perhaps have demurred. And he ventures the assertion, which would certainly have startled Berkeley, that the condition of man as a *sentient* creature is not the reason of his incapacity to see things in themselves; that that incapacity is inherent in the thought itself, and may extend to all finite intellects.

Trans. *Æsthet.*, 2. Abschnitt Von der Zeit.

False Idealism.

Ibid, § 3.

Es mag seyn dass alle endliche denkende Wesen herein mit dem Menschen nothwendig übereinkommen müssen.

Die Transcendentale Logik.

106. The last remark evidently belongs to the new subject. None may help us better to understand what that subject is. We have been occupied with the conditions under which we contemplate objects through the *senses*—we have been considering how *experience* is possible. Now we are to consider the conditions under which we *think;* how the act of thinking is

upon the liberty which men have longed for; not encouragements or permissions to break loose. I look upon time and space as without me. I may begin to dream of a world to which they are not attached. I may think that I know some way of climbing into that world. But if they are about me at every instant; if they check my breathing; if they will not let me see or know anything without their intervention, what escape have I? Must not that which lies beyond, then, be that phantom region—that land of mist or melting ice—which attracts so many travellers, and destroys so many? Our stern doctor understands perfectly well this consequence of his doctrine. He enforces it; if he can have his way, he will not let any of us shrink from it. Whether that is the *ultimate* result of his teachings we shall learn hereafter. So far as we have gone, it seems to be the result of them. The way is blocked on all sides; and we shall find that it is to be blocked still more. Those who deny that a spiritual or an eternal world can have anything to do with man may boast in this part of his treatise, and through many parts of it of which we have not yet had a glimpse, that they never had such a champion as Kant; that all English and French assertors of the visible as the only proper or possible sphere of our thoughts and hopes have stopped far short of him.

Kant's doctrine seems to cut off the possibility of fellowship with a world not under these conditions.

Kant does full justice to the popular doctrine of sensation.

104. The disciple of Locke should also remember—and this reflection cannot but increase his charity towards an old enemy—that Kant, in his effort to give everything a place, clearly accords the *first* place to æsthetics—in other words, to sensation. He accepts the English and French teachings of his day, like Lessing and others of his countrymen; he only exhorts the defenders of sensation to be true to themselves; to let us have the full benefit of their discoveries; not to suffer the formulas of logic or mere traditional dogmas to interfere with them. The distinction between the region of æsthetics, which occupies Kant in the first section of his work, and that of logic, which is the subject of his second, is one of the most important in the critical philosophy. All had felt and confessed that there must be such a distinction. The logician was harassed by the intrusion of partial observations and experiences among his general forms; the observer of nature had been obliged to seek a method for shaking himself free from the insulting interruption of the logician in the midst of his experiments. But nothing could come out of a mere artificial division of their provinces. Those who acknowledged nothing besides sensible experience, at once claimed the logician as their child, and treated him with unnatural contempt and cruelty. It was necessary for the peace of the world that his position should be ascertained; that he

Sense and logic.

should be enabled to hold his own; that he should not be allowed to invade the naturalist or the artist in their rightful work. Kant addresses himself to this task. No one was so fitted for it. No one had a better right to speak on behalf of logic, for it would be difficult to find a more acute and stern logician. No one was more certain to lay bare its unfair pretensions, to find out when it aimed at proving, what it could not prove, or took advantage of an ill-gotten premiss; for his special vocation was to prevent such frauds; it belonged to his critical faculty.

Kant's logic.

105. Before we pass to this second subject, let us make sure how much we have gained in the first. We have been learning what are the conditions under which we contemplate the objects which present themselves to our senses. We have separated those conditions which belong to our minds from the objects. Have we then discovered a way of knowing these objects in themselves? By no means. We only know the appearances which they present to us. Nor can we ever hope, by any improved *mechanical* contrivances, by any *intellectual* contrivances, to pierce this veil, to pass from the appearance to the thing itself. We may say that the rainbow is only an appearance; that the rain is the thing. Physically this is true; in a higher, stricter sense the rain is as much an appearance as the rainbow. It is a most unfair representation of this doctrine, Kant says, to say that it changes things into appearances. The things are, however we see them. Berkeley fell into the mistake of making them unsubstantial precisely because he mingled them with space and time, which he was sure could have no substance. Transfer them to their proper place in the mind itself, and all you are then obliged to affirm is, that these conditions so necessarily determine your perception of the things that it can never reach to their nature. So far Kant's idealism is more moderate than what he supposed to be Berkeley's; but he deduced conclusions from it respecting the precariousness of the arguments of natural theologians to which Berkeley would perhaps have demurred. And he ventures the assertion, which would certainly have startled Berkeley, that the condition of man as a *sentient* creature is not the reason of his incapacity to see things in themselves; that that incapacity is inherent in the thought itself, and may extend to all finite intellects.

Things not known in themselves

Trans. *Æsthet.*, 2. Abschnitt Von der Zeit.

False idealism.

Ibid, § 3.

Es mag seyn dass alle endliche denkende Wesen herein mit dem Menschen nothwendig übereinkommen müssen.

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Die Transcendentale Logik.

The two kinds of logic.

The common logic.

The common analysis.

The common dialectic.

The transcendental analytic.

Synthesis.

Effort after unity.

possible. The two acts are distinguishable: one presumes a capacity of receiving representations from without; the other the spontaneous power of moulding those representations—of forming notions or conceptions within. This is strictly the logical region as distinct from the æsthetical. But we have surely had logical treatises enough; the world is somewhat tired of them—asks what good they have done, or are likely to do—how far the search for truth has been advanced by them. Kant does not purpose to do again what has been done before. The common logic has its purpose; his transcendental logic has a quite different, though an analogous, purpose. The common logic abstracts from the exercises of the understanding certain common rules or maxims which apply to all these exercises—rules which we cannot violate without involving ourselves in a contradiction whatever subjects we are discussing. The discovery and assertion of these rules constitute the logical *analysis*. It is purely negative. To make it effectual for any special service a dialectic is demanded. At first it promises brilliantly. We fancy we are in possession of laws of the understanding which will supply us with an organon for each particular study. When we begin to use the organ, we find that we are in want of special experiences, that it may not be quite tuneless. It is still worse when we fancy we can turn it to a more general task. Then we invent out of laws and experiences together an intricate sophistry. We do not think that Kant means to charge the ancients with using their dialectics only or mainly for sophistical purposes, though that sense has been given to his words; but if their dialectic were employed to correct the abuses which logic had itself engendered, it would still be a very inadequate weapon for the philosopher. He wants a deeper analytic—a more complete and searching dialectic. He cannot be content to abstract certain rules of the understanding from their objects. He wants to see how the understanding works upon and with those objects; how it receives representations; how it groups them together; how it forms conceptions from them; how it brings those conceptions into one. We want to trace this synthetical process—this perpetual effort after unity. We cannot refer it to sensible experience. That receives the representations in all their variety and confusion. Whence comes the craving to make them one—the power of making them one? To understand this must be to understand the understanding itself—to look into our own selves. Here is our analytic, and the dialectic must correspond to it. The impostures which the understanding practices on itself in its efforts to pass beyond itself—in its determination to make an experience out of its pure conceptions, or to invest with reality what

The dialectic.

is only appearance—must be laid bare. We must examine the conclusions and demonstrations at which it fancies it has arrived, and see whether there is any ground for the conclusions—whether the proof is genuine, or is assumed in the premises. However many hopes may be scattered in the process, it must be pursued relentlessly. The critical philosophy is born to be the scourge of dreamers, especially when their dreams assume the shape and air of philosophy, especially when they try to turn their dreams outwards, and apply them to the business of the world.

The analysis of conceptions.

The nature of the investigation.

The categories.

Kant's primary conditions.

107. Whatever may be the reward, the struggle to obtain it is a sore one. We find ourselves in dark mines, breathing damp vapours, uncheered by a single glimpse of blue sky, scarcely with a safety lamp, rather in search of one. A brave man might shrink from such an enterprise. Kant never does shrink for a moment; he seems to enjoy the atmosphere. He threads his way through dark chasms, striking his foot at every moment against some sharp *begriff*, or sinking down through a set of soft begriffs, which have been made wet and clammy by a mixture with some outward experiences; till he feels his way to a lower stratum, which he can pronounce pure rock; but which, after all, is not rock; only a conception of what is, or might be, or should be, rock. At every step he beckons us on, assuring us that we are doing just what Locke and other wise men bade us do; and that there is actually no method of doing it but this; that if we are to be acquainted with ourselves, or even to know the conditions under which we arrive at any sort of acquaintance with ourselves, and with anything besides ourselves, the way is this. And no one can deny that in this dark region he does, by some faculty or other, perceive the rudiments of thoughts which we have heard much of, and probably have turned to some use in the upper or middle world. The categories, for instance, appeared to us a very remarkable basis for the Aristotelian logic. We admired the sagacity which detected those ten pillars of our intellect; we accepted them without asking too curiously whether they were a primitive or a composite work. They served their purpose; if they aimed to do more, and to interfere with the discoveries of the experimentalist, he must fight his own battle. But Kant, after paying suitable compliments to the genius of Aristotle, for perceiving that there must be conditions which belong to all understandings alike, from which all conceptions must take their rise, entirely demurs to *these* conditions; maintains that they are mixed with heterogeneous materials; that they are in nowise elements of the mind. Then he discovers in Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Modality those four data or primary conditions which lie

beneath our judgments. In his commentaries on previous teachers, and in all his illustrations of the difference between the transcendental analytic and the common analytic, he throws back a light upon the latter which one who desires not merely to use the logical rules, but to know why he uses them, and what they mean, must thankfully welcome. On the other hand, when he is occupied with Descartes, and those who have referred to their internal perception as if that gave them a ground upon which they might stand, though all external things should be ever so uncertain, we find that they afford us no resting-place. The existence of external things, we are told, is presumed in the very act of thought which affirms our own existence. We could not believe one if we did not believe the other. We cannot contemplate ourselves more truly, more apart from conditions, than we can contemplate the things without. The condition of time adheres as much to our conception of ourselves as the condition of space adheres to our conception of that which the senses tell us of; a conclusion which sounds very mournful, which might almost drive us to despair, as if all within and without were equally insecure and precarious; but which Kant assures us is the road out of scepticism. He is equally sure that it is the escape from all arrogant dogmatism; that so far from glorifying *à priori* principles, he is reducing them to their right level and proper dimensions. Let us hear how he expresses himself on this point in the section from which we have already quoted. "The transcendental analytic has, therefore, this weighty result. It teaches us that the understanding *à priori* can do thus much and no more; it can make a general anticipation of the form of a possible experience. This philosophy teaches us that since nothing but the apparent is the object of experience, the understanding can never overleap those boundaries of sensible perception within which all objects are offered to us. The primary maxims of the understanding are merely interpretations of appearances. The proud name of ontology, therefore, which promises to give us an *à priori* knowledge of things, disposed in a complete system, must be abandoned; the modest title of an *Analysis of the Understanding* must be substituted for it."

Internal perceptions imply the external.

Time involved in our conception of ourselves.

Escape from scepticism and dogmatism.

Phænomena und Noumena, B. III.

108. With this clear indication of Kant's purpose—of his most inward conviction—we pass to his *Dialectic*, confident that it will enforce all the precautions which introduce it, that it will point out to us some more effectual security than we knew of before against the errors to which we are liable when we try to break loose from those conditions by which we appear to be irrevocably confined. Such securities it is the especial aim of our author to provide us with. But we are not yet fully aware of the circumstances which make them necessary. His

The transcendental dialectic.

continual assurances that creatures constituted as we are can only receive impressions from sensible objects, and form conceptions within, and that these conceptions can only derive the materials on which they work from the senses, might have led any anti-Platonist to hope that *he* would be the effectual protestant against all North-West passages, through fields of ice, into an "unconditioned" region. Certainly he desired to be such a protestant. That there are spiritual intuitions which correspond to sensible intuitions was not a doctrine which found the least favour with him. But being a resolute student and critic of facts; being determined to ignore nothing in man which he actually found in him; being assured that he could not provide against the excesses or outrages of a faculty which he has refused to recognize; Kant, in his dialectic, advances cautiously, we might say reluctantly, but with a confidence which his reluctance makes more remarkable, to the assertion that there is in us, besides the Understanding, a power which is implied in it, and without which it could not be exercised—a faculty which, by its very nature, must aim at the unconditioned, and therefore needs a special dialectic to keep it in order. It would be wrong to give his statement in any words but his own. "All our knowledge starts from the *Senses*, goes on from them to the *Understanding*, and ends with the *Reason*, than which nothing higher is found in us, either to work up the material which we derive from the intuitions of sense or to evolve the highest unity of the thought." He goes on to define the understanding as the faculty of *rules*, the *reason* as the faculty of *principles*. "We sometimes dignify with the name of principles axioms under which a number of cases have been subsumed. They are so relatively to those cases. But principles in their truest sense are the *grounds* of conceptions. The highest conceptions of the understanding contain something which can only be found purely in the reason. The reason, therefore, overlooks the understanding, and uses its conceptions as the understanding overlooks the senses, and uses their representations. The reason has no direct commerce with the representations of the senses; it only approaches them through the understanding. It seeks the condition of conditions. The special problem of the reason for its logical use is this,—"Given the conditions of the understanding, to find the unconditioned on which their unity depends." This unity must be synthetical. Analysis leads us to a condition as its final ground. The unconditioned it does not touch. The understanding derives all its material for any synthetical conclusions from experience, which it subjects to conditions. The material which the reason requires for its synthesis must be the unconditioned."

Kant's dislike of the "unconditional" genuine and profound.

The reason.

Die Transcendentale Dialektik Einleitung, § 11. *Von der reinen Vernunft als dem Sitzer des transcendentalen Scheins.*

Distinction of the understanding and the reason.

The reason overlooks the understanding.

Ideas.

Kant and Plato.

Kant's honesty.

Section entitled *Von den Ideen überhaupt*.

Statesmen need an ideal.

Ideas in nature.

109. This phraseology may strike us as especially Kantian, though there have been many anticipations of it in all our previous history. Kant declares that he does not like to send forth a new coinage; he would always rather see whether that which has been current among eminent thinkers in the old world may not be refitted to serve his purpose. In this spirit he examines the Platonical use of the word *idea*, which Aristotle had treated with so much scorn, which philosophical historians like Brücker had denounced as specially absurd in its political application, kings and statesmen being required to carry with them the ideal of a commonwealth. Kant has no natural leaning to Plato. What is *transcendent* in the one is as unlike as possible to that to which the name *transcendental* is given by the other. In fact, if any man ever entered upon the study of Plato with a mind biassed by all its habits against him, Kant must have been that man. Nevertheless, he arrives at the conclusion that ideas in that sense in which they are not identical with conceptions of the understanding, but are principles lying beneath those conceptions, must be recognized by any faithful critic, and that the grave Brücker was peculiarly unhappy in the instance which he selected for his humour. That statesmen should set before themselves a standard for their polity, and for the morality which answers to the polity, higher than they are able to reach, or than the communities of men may ever permit them to reach, does not appear to Kant a strange, foolish, or unpractical demand. He rather fancies that a number of practical misdoings may be discovered in the acts of politicians—that a number of fantastic theories may have bewildered their brains—because they thought more of their own opinion, or that which the age expected of them, than of the justice and right which Plato said was implied in the existence of a state as well as of an individual man. The doctrine of the Greek, that all creation implies ideas after which it is fashioned, was mixed, Kant thinks, with much extravagance and with much that is inconsistent with later discoveries. He cannot reject it—he sees in it the germs of a truth. But he makes this grand distinction,—"In respect to *Nature*, experience presents us with the rule, and is the fountain of knowledge. But, in respect of *Moral Laws*, experience is, alas! the mother of fantasy or delusion, and it is in the last degree contemptible to deduce laws concerning that which I ought to do from, or to seek to limit them by, that which is done."

Kant not wandering into an unpractical region.

110. "That strain we heard was of a higher measure;" some readers may exclaim when they listen to these latter sentences. Others will fear that we are travelling further and further from

A foe of all speculators.

The ideas of the reason.

Hume and from Paley. Very far from both; but not in the sense in which a hasty consideration of Kant's words might lead us to imagine. He is not about to glorify ideas at the expense of practical life. He has the most vehement, the most exclusive reverence for the practical; so far as Plato or any man was a speculator, and tried to erect a speculative system on the basis of ideas, so far he utterly rejects his guidance. To warn his countrymen, and all men, against the dangers of speculation, against the temptation to make the ideas of the reason, upon which he sets so much store, into maxims of experience, or into external realities, is the main business of his treatise. Most mercilessly that task is accomplished. Psychological arguments, cosmological, ontological, theological, which have passed current, and have been supposed to carry weight, are all tried in his dialectical balances, and found to be essentially light. Then the delusions which cannot be attributed to any special philosophy, but which lie in the very nature of the Reason itself, are exposed as rigorously. Kant's Organon is immeasurably more severe than Aristotle's or than Bacon's. At times everything which we think we have gained when we entered upon this division of our subject appears again to be slipping from us. GOD—IMMORTALITY—FREEDOM, these we find to be the ideas or postulates of the reason. We have them; they are with us. But *what* are they? Can we proceed to reason from them, to build any conclusions upon the fact that such ideas are? If we do, we at once involve ourselves in contradictions. They are ideas assuredly—fundamental principles; but they cannot be treated as realities external to the mind. They are only within it. If the Atheist, or the denier of immortality, begins to dispute with me, I can defy him to prove a negative. But I can go no further. I cannot make that into an object which exists in me the subject. If I do, I shall invest it with some of the conditions and limitations of my own nature, or I shall call in experience to represent to me that which is above experience.

Could a revelation help the impotency of the reason.

111. Are, then, senses, understanding, reason, all equally at fault? Are they all alike prone to deception, all alike unproductive? If that is the case, let no one dream that he can help out our weakness by speaking of a divine communication—a revelation from above. We have nothing which can receive such a communication; nothing which can turn it to any account. The voice may speak, there is no ear which can take it in. But Kant does not leave us in this utter desolation of heart and hope. No results can follow from trying to speculate with those ideas of the reason. They will only turn round and round upon us; we can never get them outside of us to act upon us. But

The practical outlet.

Freedom and law.

The idea of God.

Immortality.

The absolutely right will.

Happiness.

let us look at them practically. I have the idea of freedom, and I want a law over me—over *me*, this being who has this demand for freedom. A law; that is, something which commands me—something which I did not make for myself. If it is not imperative, it is nothing; if I may alter it according to some taste or fancies of mine, it is nothing. Yet, it must be the law of a free being; *this* idea of freedom, if it is only negative, affirms so much. And the law must tell me what is right—what I with my freedom *ought* to do. The freedom calls for the law, the law respects the freedom. Now contemplate those other ideas of God and Immortality in *this* light, and see whether they remain ineffectual and barren. The idea of God becomes that of the lawgiver; the lawgiver who commands what is right. But such an idea involves an actual Being—one who *is* right—one who is not under our limitations in the exercise of right—one who will make right prevail. The idea of *immortality* combines itself with this idea of God. The limitations of our mind interfere with the full accomplishment of His purpose. We demand an unlimited range for the success of the right will, for the attainment of what is implied in our freedom and in our sense of law. God stands out before us as the eternal and absolutely good Being. The happiness of man must consist in the pursuit of that goodness, in the conformity to it. Happiness in any sense but this, in any sense in which it is merely identical with eudæmonism—good luck or good fortune—never can be the end of any creature constituted as man is constituted.

Kant has no desire to escape from restraints.

A God of nature not enough for man.

Helplessness of metaphysical arguments.

112. We have thus been driven—fairly driven—to a ground beyond those conditions which appear to limit all our knowledge, our acts, and our hopes. Let the reader observe carefully *how* Kant has been led to transgress those boundaries which no one had so rigorously defined as himself, which it was part—this should always be kept in mind—of his function as a *transcendental* philosopher to define. It is not from any passion for the excesses of the reason; it is not from any weariness of the restraint of laws. He is in the act of *prohibiting* the excesses of the reason when the discovery of this necessity bursts upon him. He accepts it because he can find no laws that are adequate to hold fast human creatures if he does not. He has listened to the discussions and demonstrations of those who think they can establish the existence of a Creator of nature from the facts of nature. They appear to him feeble and unsatisfactory; but, were they ever so strong, such a Creator, so setting in motion the machinery of the universe, could not satisfy him. He has examined the metaphysical reasonings which lead to the same conclusion, or which are urged in support of the immortality of the soul. He can make nothing of them;

but if he could, *what* God, *what* immortality would they establish? Leaving, then, dogmatists and sceptics to conduct these controversies, and to arrive at any results they can—being convinced inwardly that they will arrive at *no* result, that each can say just enough to make the conclusions of the other untenable—he falls back upon this moral law, this law for free creatures. Once admitting that, he can, nay, he must, recognize all nature as subject to the same Righteous Being; he must contemplate the world as a *moral* world, the universe as designed for a good end.

Kant not a mere legalist.

113. The first impression which this language may produce upon us will perhaps be this: that Kant had a very profound impression of the sacredness of mere law; that he demanded a rigorous adherence to that which is prescribed; but that whatever is besides this—whatever we include under the idea of cheerful obedience—was not recognized by him. Before we adopt that opinion we should listen to these words out of his chapter "On Motives" in his *Criticism of the Practical Reason:*—"That which is essential to the worth of actions is that the moral law and the will should be in *direct* harmony. It may happen that the determination of the will is in accordance with the moral law, but through the intervention of a feeling of some kind or other; then that becomes the ground of the action; it is not done *for the law's sake.* Then there is legality in it, not *morality.* If under the name of motives we comprehend whatever determines the will of a being whose reason is not necessarily, by its nature, in accordance with the law which is given to it, we of course can attribute no motives to the Divine Will, and we must make the motives of the human will, and of the will of every created rational creature, the moral law itself; this determining both, objectively, what the action *should* be, and, subjectively, what it *shall* be; provided always that the action must fulfil, not merely the letter of the law, but its spirit." Such a passage, which expresses, we believe, the inmost mind of its author, must protect him from the charge of confounding legality with morality; while it shows, in the strongest degree, how sternly legal his mind was—how impossible it was for him to conceive of any good action which could be the result either of a mere impulse or a self-willed calculation. "It is of the greatest importance to look with the keenest eye upon the subjective principle, upon which all our moral maxims and judgments are founded, so that we may be sure the morality is placed solely in their necessity, as resulting from duty and respect to the law, not the least from love or inclination to that which the actions will bring forth. For men, and for all rational creatures, moral necessity is compulsion, that is, obligation, and

Kritik der practischen Vernunft, 1 Th. 1, B. III., Haupst. *Von den Triebfedern der reinen practischen Vernunft.*

But with a profound worship of law.

Same section—*Es ist von der grössten Wichtigkeit.* &c.

every action grounded thereupon must be set forth simply as a duty, not as a process which is already liked by us, or may be liked hereafter. . . . The moral law is for an all-perfect Being a law of holiness—for the will of every finite rational creature a law of duty—a law of moral necessity—a law which determines the actions of that creature by respect for the law and by reverence for his duty." He therefore treats somewhat lightly the notion that a benevolent interest in the well-being of men is or can become a principle of morality. But he accepts the words, "Love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself," as essentially moral, seeing they pre-suppose a command to love, and a reverence for that command. And he remarks that they stand in rather a strange contrast to that principle which makes individual happiness the ground of morality, the maxim of which must be, "Love thyself above all things, God and thy neighbour for thy own sake."

The command, "Love God and thy neighbour."

Kant compared with Hume and with Paley as ethical teachers.

114. We may now see in what radical and fundamental sense Kant was opposed to Hume, and even more to Paley. All three start from the moral ground. All three regard speculation, philosophical or theological, as important only for moral ends. Hume lays his ethical groundwork in an easy happiness mainly social, but which permits the amusement of a free exercise of thought to those who like that amusement. To remove impediments from this happiness he devotes himself to abstruse philosophy; he sweeps away the doctrine of causality, the belief in miracles, supernatural fears and hopes generally. Paley lays his ethical groundwork also in happiness, but not exactly in easy social happiness. The world must be kept in order. The polity of nations must be upheld. There must be a motive violent enough to hinder men from doing mischief. The will of God, which Hume had thrown aside, is necessary for these purposes. Such a will must somehow be proved (miracles Paley thinks the only sufficient proof) to have given laws to man, and to have confirmed those laws with sanctions of fear and hope. Such a will must somehow be proved (Paley thinks the adaptations of nature to different ends a sufficient proof) to have designed our world. Kant is no fine gentleman. He has no special vocation as the protector of drawing-rooms from reproaches of conscience or fears of the future. Neither does he perceive that it is his function to provide the policeman with those reproaches and fears, to assist him in his work. But he has a strong conviction that there is an authority over him, which does not suspend his liberty, but without obedience to which he cannot enjoy his liberty. The existence of this law for himself and for his kind —for himself as one of a kind—makes morality possible and real for him. *He* devotes himself to abstract philosophy like

Difference between the two British teachers.

Ground of Kant's morality.

His agreement with Hume.

Their opposition.

Hume, also with a moral end always before him. But the results are different, as the starting-point was different. He accepts all Hume's *positive* statements so far as they assert the dignity of experience, so far as they make that the key to knowledge. He accepts Hume's *negative* statements so far as they show the baselessness of attempts to draw principles out of experience, which are not in it. He says more than had ever been said before of the limitation of the human intellect. He says more than had ever been said before of the helplessness of mere speculation. But all this searching criticism, all this denial, lead us at last to the conclusion, adopted without a single theological prejudice, arrived at by casting all such prejudices aside, that there are eternal grounds of morality; that they have their basis in an Eternal Being; that conformity with them is the condition of man's eternal blessedness.

Kant's relation to the eighteenth century.

Locke.

Berkeley.

Leibnitz.

Edwards.

How Kant's ethics connect him with the age.

115. It has been our great object, in these slight indications respecting the critical philosophy, to show that it is not, as we sometimes fancy, out of harmony with all that has preceded it, but is the natural sequel to the inquiries of the century. Kant adhered with singular fidelity to Locke's doctrine, that the subject which we should first and chiefly understand is the understanding itself; that for this purpose we must begin from the senses; that all pursuit of being should be eschewed. Berkeley's idealism is subjected to a careful examination, is stripped of its paradoxical character, is vindicated from some obvious objections. If Leibnitz, as the parent of Wolff's dogmatism, or as the mere establisher of a system, sometimes undergoes hard treatment at his hands, all the most interesting questions which Leibnitz raised—those, for example, respecting space and time in his controversy with Clarke—are brought to a conclusion, in which we fancy he might have acquiesced. In the passage we have just been considering, the feeble part of the doctrine of Edwards—that which concerns his doctrine of motives—is exposed, but only by a justification of that high idea of disinterested morality, in connection with an entire subjection to the highest will, for which Edwards contended. So that Kant's reputation as a destroyer even of the metaphysics and psychology of his predecessors has been greatly exaggerated. But as a moralist he is emphatically the representative of his age. It had been occupied with moral questions. All others had given way to them. Religious men complained that the discourses of its preachers were simply ethical. But they spoke more than those whom they denounced of the moral law; they presented it in all its terrors to the conscience; they held forth the possibility of a more perfect righteousness than the legal. However loose might be the

Different indications of its character.

Butler.

Kant subjective.

Morality making him objective.

The philosopher as opposed to the preacher.

His contradiction inevitable.

His disciples not his most real admirers.

moral code of the French teachers, they all affirmed practical morality of some kind to be the important thing; they denounced divines for substituting unintelligible dogmas in place of it. In the judgment of such students as Butler again, moral inquiries stood above all others. How a moral law is implied in the constitution of man is the great argument of his sermons. How a moral government is implied in the constitution of nature is the main argument of his analogy. The latter modifies the more complete scheme of the former. A partly objective morality (we are compelled to use the word, which we have avoided as long as possible) comes in to modify the purely subjective morality of the discourses. All these tendencies of the time Kant exhibits in their highest development. He can esteem nothing really but morality; he sacrifices everything to morality. Naturally he would be disposed to have no dealings with theology; it is too like ontology. But it resumes its dignity as a part of practical morality. Kant wishes to be purely subjective. If he must have a religion, he would contemplate it within the bounds of the pure reason. But when we inquire as to what the reason demands for its practical needs we find there must be a commanding law—a Being uttering that law. Kant, in his practical character, becomes more objective than Butler, departs even more widely from the position within which each sought to entrench himself, beyond which neither could advance far. For we must repeat what we have said when speaking of Butler himself. Though he was a preacher (in other words, a herald of that which comes *to* men) professionally, he was by instinct and character a philosopher, or seeker of principles in facts. Kant was professionally, as well as by instinct and character, a philosopher. He had no business, no wish, to be anything else. If he becomes anything else it is from a philosophical necessity. And, this being the case, he may be surely pardoned,—it was not intentional arrogance, though it may have had the effect of arrogance,—if he expanded the limits of philosophy to make it comprehend that to which it had pointed, if he supposed that to be included in the pure reason which the pure reason could not dispense with. In all such assumptions he will be found his own best corrector. If his completeness and apparent symmetry were sure to procure him a number of sworn disciples, men pledged to break a lance for the Kantian system against all who defended any other, there would be many more who would owe him permanent gratitude because he had awakened them to perceive what they were and what they wanted; to perceive, therefore, that neither his system nor any other could satisfy them. Such men will have understood the meaning and worth of a critical philosophy; the others will have made it useless and self-contradictory in the attempt to glorify it.

Germans who were not strictly philosophers.

The experimental philosopher.

The artist.

116. It would not become us to speak of Kant's contemporaries who made Germany illustrious by their works in various departments which cannot strictly be called philosophical. There was so much of philosophy blended with their literature, their language so much marked them out as belonging to a philosophical country, that it may often be hard to draw the line. Still it must be drawn, and with. so much the more strictness on account of the temptation and excuse to include all under the common title. The one example of Lessing suffices to show how the German man-of-letters almost of necessity became both a philosopher and a theologian. It is a reason for not multiplying instances of the same kind. Goethe might easily be described as an experimental philosopher in almost every department in which experiments could be made—in the noise of cannon-balls, in the nature of colours, in the hearts of men and women. Possibly no description might suit him more perfectly than this. With philosophy in its ordinary sense he appears to have made himself acquainted just so far as to satisfy himself that it would lead to no result; to assure himself that the artist has a much nobler vocation. Vast as were the differences of character and intellect between him and Schiller, they seem to have held that faith in common. Art was for them in nearer relation with human life than philosophy, or even than history. The dramatist, even the actor, brought out something in man which was higher in him than could be seen in his daily life—a unity in his acts and purposes which mere science could never discover. In different degrees this must have been the conviction of the greater part of those men who devoted themselves to æsthetics, in Kant's sense of the word, either as creators or as critics. They might value researches and inquiries into the actual condition of things, into the records of human doings; but they valued more highly all that told of the productive powers of men—all pictures, sagas, nursery tales—whatever presented the graceful or beautiful side of life, whatever concerned the harmonies of life rather than either the facts of it or than that truth which the philosophers supposed to lie somewhere beneath the facts or beneath the nature of the man who was investigating them. The works and biographies of such men may throw a valuable side-light upon the subjects with which we are engaged, but they were in themselves rather protests against the zeal with which their countrymen devoted themselves to such subjects.

Philologers.

117. The very opposite of these were the great philologers who began to distinguish themselves at this time in Germany,

Philosophical,

But opposed to philosophers as such.

to whose labours, as to those of the artists, Lessing had given a powerful impulse. They were not less rigid in the pursuit of historical truth, in the separation of it from what looked to them like fables, in the detection of it through or under fables, than the others were in claiming fables as materials for the modern artist, or as exhibitions of the artistical power which men had displayed in a former day. To distinguish between the philologer and the philosopher may be even more difficult than to distinguish between the artist and the philosopher; they use so many of the same instruments, each requires so many of the faculties which belong to the other. In practice, however, the difference becomes marked and obvious; and no persons were probably more impatient of the conceptions and formulas of the school than the men who were busy with investigating the actions or the speech of human beings. In tracing language to its sources they must indeed have continually counteracted or assisted each other. The *à priori* power of producing words, the effects of sensible experience upon them, involved all the controversies with which metaphysicians were engaged; the growth of races, and the relation of particular races to the human race, if studied with the keen insight of the philologer, will have shown him that transcendental questions were not mere crudities which his brother-student was thrusting upon him. Such discoveries may have brought them to a partial reconcilement; but they will have seen their roads branching off, and will only have hoped to meet again at some distant point if each steadily followed his own.

The philosophers who were also artists or philologers.

118. There were, however, men, and more in Germany than elsewhere, who found themselves mixed with both these classes, who at one time may have been reckoned in either of them, who could never have been what they were without their joint influence, and yet who must always be considered as members of the philosophical class, and as having done for philosophy what no men more strictly and exclusively wearing its livery could have done. Two such we have now to speak of, not only for their own sakes, but as indicating the passing away of one philosophical period and the approach of another. The first of them, Herder, belongs strictly to the period before the French revolution; the work for which he is chiefly memorable was published in 1784. The second, Jacobi, may be easily claimed for the next century. But the earliest point of his philosophical career falls into the same time with Herder's, and that part of it throws much light upon the thoughts of those men who had preceded and of those who were to follow him.

Herder (1744-1803).

119. Johannes Gottfried Herder would be ordinarily described as one of the most conspicuous *Humanists* of the eighteenth

The Humanists of different ages.

Contrast of the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries.

Philological and physical studies.

Romanism and Protestantism.

century. The title is rightly given to him, and he would gladly have adopted it. To many it will at once recal the Erasmus and the Reuchlin of the Reformation period. Nor would it be uninteresting to compare the meanings which were given to the name, and the persons who bore it, at two crises both so memorable. But we should be greatly mistaken if we supposed that the cultivation of refined scholarship, in opposition to scholastic Latin and sacerdotal absurdities, however they might have been comprehended in the idea of humanity as it presented itself to the mind of Herder would in the least have satisfied it. In the days of Erasmus new continents were beginning to unveil themselves to the wonder and the avarice of Europe. The study of Nature was commencing a struggle with the forms of logic and the dreams of Alchemy. In the centuries since a mass of observations respecting the customs and the traditions of nations had been accumulated; some information had been obtained respecting their faiths and their speech; especially the East had begun to give up its treasures; its older classical tongue was claiming a place beside the tongues of Greece and Rome. The physical student had pursued his researches with such vigour and success that he seemed likely to be crushed under the weight of them; the seer was lost in the multitude of the things which he had seen. In theology the contrast was still more conspicuous. The Humanist of the sixteenth century looked on with a mixture of indifference and despair at the beginning of a religious conflict in which he feared that the art and letters which were dearer to him than the disputes of Tetzels and Luthers would be lost. He had hoped that Leo would restore the age; alas! Leo was himself the cause of this Wittenberg noise and fury. The Humanist of the eighteenth century might congratulate himself that these combatants were exhausted; that each portion of Christendom was tolerably content to hold its own ground, and had some ado to maintain that. But he might, if he could look onward, perceive that there was another earthquake preparing. If he was in a melancholy mood he might fear that that earthquake was not less likely to engulf all which had been heretofore called humane than the theological earthquake in the days of Erasmus. If he was sanguine he might draw auguries from the results of the earlier convulsion, that trees and flowers would blossom again on the broken soil, that larger and more fruitful fields might reward the industry of those who would cultivate them.

Extract from Herder's *Ideen.*

120. But Humanist is a vague and general term. That Herder was not satisfied with it—that he wished to be recognized as an actual person, and that he recognized his reader in

that character, the following extracts from his preface to his *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* will sufficiently prove:—"An author," he says, "who sends forth his book, gives along with it, be it good or be it bad, a portion of his own soul to the public. He reveals not only that wherewith his spirit hath busied itself in certain periods and occasions, the doubts with which he has been troubled, the solutions which have consoled him in the course of his life; he reckons also (otherwise what sufficient impulse could he have had to become an author, and to communicate all the affairs of his heart to a strange crowd?) upon some, perchance very few, souls who are in tune with his own, over whom, in the labyrinth of their years, these, or ideas like these, will become mighty. With them he holds invisible converse; he participates his experiences with them, as he expects in return their better thoughts and teachings. This invisible commerce of spirits and hearts is the main benefit of printing, which otherwise might have brought almost as much harm as good to literary nations. I felt myself when I was writing in a circle of persons who actually took an interest in what I was saying, and who were willing to unfold their best and most sympathizing thoughts in answer to mine. This is the most beautiful reward of writing; and a true-hearted man delights more in the thoughts which he awakens than in those which he utters. Whoever remembers what this or that book has been at times to himself—how this or that thought of a book has come home to him—what gladness it has awakened in him to find another spirit far off from him, and yet in its exercises very near to him, upon his own or upon a better track—how such a thought has often for long years occupied us, and drawn us on—will regard a writer who speaks to him, and imparts to him his inner life, not as an hireling, but as a friend who comes forth trustingly with his imperfect thoughts, that the reader may think with him, and bring what is incomplete in him nearer to completeness. In the case of a subject like mine, the history of mankind, the philosophy of human history, such a humanity on the part of the reader is, I think, an agreeable and a primary duty. He who wrote this was a man, and thou art a man who readest. He might err, and has perhaps erred. Thou hast kinds of knowledge which he has not, and might have; use then what thou canst, and recognize his good purpose. Instead of blaming him, improve what he has done—raise his building higher. With feeble hand he laid some of the first stones of a building which it will require centuries to complete; happy when these stones are covered with earth and are forgotten, like him who brought them, if on them, or on some other ground, that more beautiful building shall be raised."

An author's craving for sympathy.

Communion of writer and reader.

The history of humanity.

Testimonies to him. *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 10th Buch.

121. Such language as this must convey a pleasant impression to the reader of the man from whom he is about to learn. That impression will be modified, if not shaken, by some reports which his contemporaries give us of him, deepened by others. Goethe met him at Strasburg when he was about to undergo an operation for his eyes. His portrait, clear and living we need not say, shows us a man of large erudition, much power of influencing his equals or his juniors, stoical in his capacity of bearing pain, but haughty, ungracious, now and then rude—the *reverse* of humane. The picture may have received some of its colouring from their subsequent intercourse at Weimar, where the uncongeniality of their dispositions became more evident to both. And there he received the most cordial and affectionate testimony from another great man of the day, Jean Paul Richter; there he led a pure domestic life, which the wife who knew him best, and from her own nobleness was able to appreciate nobleness, has thankfully and beautifully commemorated. How he came to occupy himself with the subject which has procured him his fame he shall tell us. "In my very early years, when the meadows of knowledge lay before me in all their morning brightness, so much of which the noonday sun of our life takes away, the thought came often to me whether, since everything in the world has its philosophy and its science, there ought not to be a philosophy and a science of that which concerns us most nearly—the history of mankind in its greatness and entireness. Everything reminded me of this—metaphysics and morals, physics and natural history, religion most of all. The God who has ordered everything in nature according to measure, number, and weight—who according to these has determined the nature of things, their form, their union, their progress, their continuance, so that, from the greatest things to the grain of dust, from the power that holds earths and suns to the thread of a spider's web, only one wisdom, goodness, and power rules—He who also in human bodies, and in the powers of the human soul, has conceived all so wonderfully and divinely that, if we try to reflect on the All-Wise, we lose ourselves in an abyss of his thoughts,—how, said I to myself, can this God have departed from his wisdom and his goodness in the destiny and direction of our race, and here be without a plan? Or can He have meant to conceal from us this plan, seeing that in the lowest creatures, which concern us so little, He has shown us so much of the laws of his eternal scheme." He goes on to consider what the mischiefs are to man of ignorance about this scheme; how much it may affect his personal life; and concludes, "It is enough to say that I sought after a philosophy of the human race."

First interest in the subject.

The weary man without a plan.

122. It will strike our readers that Herder had not quite a

Herder and Vico.

right to speak of the road which he proposed to travel as one that had never been travelled before. Vico had surely attempted a philosophy or science of humanity as much as any man in later or older days had attempted a philosophy of nature or of mind. He does not bring to that attempt the information about the earth, its place among the other planets—its natural history—the division of its countries—their climate, soil, history, language, customs, religions, which Herder has amassed. He mixes with facts which he did know, many fancies which Herder's philological and philosophical culture might enable him to reject.

More genius in Vico.

But, on the other hand, as a compensation for the encyclopedic knowledge of the German, there is in the Neapolitan a penetration into the meaning of signs and symbols, a critical genius, and a profound reverence for the intuitions of different races, which we cannot think has any parallel in his successor. In our day the influence of Vico has been far more felt by other countries, and we should suppose by Germany, than that of the author of the *Ideas*. But there were circumstances in Herder's position which give an accidental importance to his work that does not belong to

The cosmopolite.

Vico's: (1.) The cosmopolitan feeling was in its commencement; French philosophy was favouring its growth; France was soon to be the great field for the display of it. Here was the German manifestation of that feeling; the German erudition was attempting to provide a satisfaction for it. (2.) There was a great prevalence of physical studies in all directions; moral and metaphysical studies were bowing to them. Kant, if any man, seemed born to restore the balance; so far as belief in morality

Man against nature.

went, he more than restored it, at least in the schools. But he had as yet no voice which could reach the people, and he discouraged rather than promoted the belief in any capacity of men to ascend into the supernatural region. Herder, educated at Konigsberg, but more a man of taste and general cultivation than a philosopher, doing full justice to the importance of all studies respecting the earth *as man's habitation*, was able to regard it chiefly in that light. In popular discourse, yet with much method and dignity, and with great pomp of illustration from naturalists as well as historians, he could make it felt that there is something in the records of the smallest and most unhappy circle of human beings which is more wonderful and more prophetic of high results than in the grandest astronomy.

Herder as a divine.

(3.) Herder was a popular preacher, and the chaplain of a refined artistical court. Those circumstances in themselves might not be of much significance, if he had not grasped Christianity with a warm and undoubted affection, and had not contemplated it as having a distinct relation to his humanistic faith. To know *what* the relation was which he perceived between them, *how* the one seemed to him to affect the other, would be to know much of the history of his time, much of the characteristic difference between it and the time that was coming.

His faith in Christ.

In the discourses of Christ, in the acts of Christ, he recognized the most perfect utterance of humanity that the world had ever known. He could not speak or think with awe enough of that utterance.

Ideen, Book 17, Band 2. p. 257 (Leipsig, 1841).

"Reverently," he says, "I bow myself before thy glorious form, thou Head and Founder of a kingdom with so mighty a purpose, of such an enduring vastness, of principles so simple, so living, of motives so energetic that the sphere of the earthly life appears too narrow for them." But he goes on to complain that for "thy religion, that is to say, thy living scheme for the well-being of men," has been substituted "a religion in thee, that is to say, an unintelligent devotion to thy person and thy cross." Two different meanings might be given to these words in our day.

Herder's two religions.

It might be supposed that Herder meant, under the name of "thy religion," to denote a manifestation of God, and under the phrase "religion in thee," to speak of the mere human faith which had been exercised about that manifestation. Or again, that he meant by "thy religion" merely the general morality and benevolence inculcated in the gospels, and by the "religion in thee," all that faith and devotion of which the person and death of Christ have been the centre.

What he meant by them.

Neither of these statements may represent Herder's intention; he may have accepted a portion of each; certainly his language inclines to the last more than to the first. Yet a belief in a Person, attachment to a Person, more than to a notion, either theological or ethical, would seem to have been in accordance with the tone of his mind and of his teaching. He must have reverenced One who made an actual sacrifice more than one who taught the beauty and worth of sacrifice.

What we may learn from them.

Did not, therefore, Herder and Herder's age demand some divinity behind that humanity of which he was the expounder and almost the worshipper? Might not the abuses, the idolatries, the persecutions of which he complained as darkening the whole of Christendom history, as cutting off Christendom from the human race, have arisen from the very notion that the Divinity is an apotheosis of the Humanity, and not the Humanity in an actual Person the revelation of the Divinity? Might not Herder's phrase of "thy religion" have been well changed for "thy revelation of God?" and might not that have been a ground for a "religion" or "faith in thee," which should have contained all that had been living in the faith and devotion of the former ages, stripped of the narrowness, cruelty, inhumanity that naturally belong to our selfish and partial conceptions? If we think so, we may accept all that we are told of the sincerity and cordiality of Herder's own belief; and yet we may perhaps learn more of men's need of a Christ, and of that which they ask of a Christ, from a friend and admirer of Herder, who was not a divine, but a merchant, a novelist, ultimately a pure philosopher, than from the divine.

Jacobi (1743-1819).

Dichtung und Wahrheit.

Jacobi and Goethe.

123. Of Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, as of Herder, we gather some interesting tidings from the autobiography of Goethe. Curious as it may seem, theological questions were those which brought him into close relation with Goethe. In a very beautiful passage of the *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, the poet describes how strongly at one period of his life he was influenced by the writings of Spinoza; what rest his eager spirit, excited by all outward objects, found in the teachings of the Jew respecting the being and the love of God; how his stern mathematical method appeared to be exactly that which his own poetical temperament required to balance and sustain it. He had found no one who was competent to enter into this feeling from having participated in it, or from a knowledge of the books that had called it forth. Jacobi knew those books thoroughly—he had penetrated into the very heart of them. He had seen his way through them; he had become the strongest of anti-Spinozists, with the most cordial appreciation of Spinoza. His readings and conversations with Goethe on still moonlight nights, at a window looking out on the Rhine, are commemorated by the latter with sincere affection and gratitude. Their paths, he says, were to lie very widely apart. The Infinite and the Eternal were not to be the occupations of the artist's intellect. It was a relief to part with his friend and instructor, that he might make himself acquainted, by personal observation, with the Flemish school of painting; but the impression remained with him, and affected all his subsequent life and works. Goethe remarks that he rendered a great service both to Jacobi and to the world by persuading the philosopher to take the course which he had always found most effectual in his own case, viz., to relieve himself of any thoughts or experiences that were oppressing him by putting them forth in some outward form.

Jacobi's intercourse with Lessing.

124. There can be no better introduction to Jacobi than this; for his studies in Spinoza were the turning-points of his own philosophical activity, and were those which brought out his relations to his most illustrious contemporaries. One of them, of whom we have spoken already, was passing out of the world when Jacobi was just making himself known in it. He had a great reverence for Lessing. He sought his acquaintance, which was readily and cordially granted. He was surprised to detect in him the same tendency which Goethe has told us of in himself In a long conversation, which he has recorded, and which is full of interest, Lessing made it clear to him that he

knew no philosophy which satisfied him so well as that of Spinoza. He had tried the different answers to it, and had found them unsatisfactory. Leibnitz, in whom he used to believe, did not seem now to show him any way out of the "One and All" of the Jew. There is much in the dialogue of the peculiar humour of Lessing. Oftentimes his words may not mean exactly what meets the ear. It would be rash and wrong to draw any conclusions from them which are inconsistent with his latest work on the education of mankind—a work which, whatever be its weaknesses or inconsistencies, certainly implies an actual educator, one who is teaching the race as a father teaches his children. The confessions of Lessing to Jacobi may indicate rather the fluctuations of his mind than any conclusion at which he had arrived; or if a conclusion, rather that one for which Goethe seems to have longed—the belief that there is a Being in whom human beings may repose from all their strivings of feeling and of understanding. When Jacobi spoke to Lessing about the freedom of the will, he answered "*more suo*," that he was "a sound Lutheran, and therefore rejected all free-will as a doctrine of the devil." It was not merely a jest. The old faith of his childhood always had a strong influence upon him. That side of truth which was involved in the belief that all things are of God came forth before him half as Luther's, half as Spinoza's; the divine solution of a difficulty to which philosophy was obliged to consent.

Spinozistic tendencies in Lessing.

Lessing's Lutheranism.

125. Jacobi, bred in France, trained in Germany, could hardly appreciate the Jewish side of Spinoza's mind. There was a Jew living in that day, who was also a philosopher and a man of high esteem among the learned. Moses Mendelssohn had been the friend of Lessing. Some of their books had been joint productions. Mendelssohn was preparing a life of Lessing. The tidings came to him through a friend of Jacobi's of the discovery which had been made of his Spinozistic opinions. They were far from acceptable tidings. The rationalist Jew of the eighteenth century was as unlike as possible to the rationalist Jew of the seventeenth. Mendelssohn was conscientious, clear-sighted, a firm believer in the theism of his time, able to justify that by all the approved arguments, able to add to them some of his own, able to give them something more of fervour from his traditional adherence to the Pentateuch and his recognition of the Psalms as at least possessing a strong element of rational devotion. Pantheism was to him both anti-Jewish and anti-rational. He could not believe that Lessing had ever seriously given in his adhesion to it. He knew enough of his modes of thought and speaking, of his customary irony, to have an explanation which was satisfactory to his own mind of Jacobi's

Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786)

An enemy of Pantheism.

Jacobi answers Spinoza in another way.

report. To a certain extent that explanation was admitted by the author of the report. But he could never concede to Mendelssohn the grounds upon which *he* assaulted Spinoza. Jacobi felt that if he was to be answered in a way that should be satisfactory to the new generation, it must be by appealing to principles which the philosophers of the eighteenth century were ignoring. His talk with Lessing and his correspondence with Mendelssohn bring out most strikingly in what this philosophy seemed to him deficient, what must lie beneath it if the age was not to become utterly godless.

The inexplicable. Jacobi's *Werke*, Band iv., p. 70, u. s. w. (Leipsic. 1839).

Does faith lead to blindness?

The ocean of Being in sight, p. 72.

126. "I love Spinoza," he said to Lessing, "because he more than any other philosopher has led me to a full conviction that certain things cannot be explained; we are not to turn our eyes from them, but we must take them as we find them. . . . I must have a spring of thought and action which remains for me inexplicable. . . . He who insists upon reducing all things to clear conceptions—upon making each thing fit into the other—will come upon things that cannot fit." "And how fares it with him," said Lessing, "who does not trouble himself about explanations?" "He," was the reply, "who does not explain the inexplicable, but only cares to know the limit at which it begins, and to confess that there it is, he will win, I suspect, the largest space for genuine human truth that can be won." "Words, dear Jacobi—mere words," answered Lessing; "the limits which you would fix cannot be defined. And on the other side you give an open field to dreaming, stupidity, blindness." "I believe," answers Jacobi, "that these limits can be found. I would not fix them. I would only ascertain what are fixed, and leave them. And as for dreaming, stupidity, blindness—" . . . "You need not seek far for these," said Lessing. "Wherever confused conceptions rule there are they." "Still more," answered Jacobi, "wherever *false* conceptions rule. The blindest, the most unreasonable, if not the stupidest belief has there its throne." So far we might think Jacobi a promising disciple of Locke, and of those who would confine the reason within reasonable limits. But an alarming passage follows. "According to my judgment the greatest merit of the seeker is to unveil *Being*. Explanation is a means to the end—never the end itself. His end, the term of his search, is that which cannot be explained—the indissoluble, the immediate, the uncompounded. The unrestrained craving for explanations," he proceeds, "involves such a passionate search for the *general*, that we take no heed of *particulars;* we are ever trying to combine when we might often, with greater advantage, be separating. While we are only putting together that which is explicable in the things, there comes an appearance of certainty

into our souls, which blinds rather than enlightens. Then we sacrifice what Spinoza profoundly and nobly calls the highest genus to the knowledge of the lower genera; we close the eye of the soul, wherewith it sees God and itself, that we may use the eyes of the body with less distraction."

David Hume, *über den Glauben oder Idealismus und Realismus ein Gespräch.* Jacobi's *Werke,* 2d Band, pp. 127-288.

Cause and effect.

Jacobi's judgment of Kant.

Is there an organ for apprehending reality?

127. This grand leap of Jacobi to the other side of philosophy had a certain charm for Lessing, though he said his old legs did not permit of his imitating it. The German journalists were, as we may easily imagine, utterly scandalized. "Faith!" "Revelation!" they cried, "the man who uses such words is a Jesuit in the disguise of a philosopher. He wants us to take everything for granted! He would subject us to authority! Protestantism is in danger!" Jacobi, with not a little display of contempt for his accusers, who, he was sure, had never exercised their own reason in any honest way, who were the mere repositories of an eighteenth century tradition, showed that he had the authority of Hume for using the word belief to express an assurance of any truth which we receive directly from sensible experience, and not from a process of reasoning. It was the usage of all writers to speak of that as being presented or made manifest to us which we do not invent or create for ourselves. Jacobi connects his unexpected appeal to the great sceptic on the subject of belief with an examination of his doctrine of cause and effect. To this he cordially assents, contending on his own grounds, and fortifying himself by the arguments of Hume, that the discovery of a living working Cause cannot be reached by any man through processes of reasoning. The dialogue has therefore a national interest for us. It is also of great importance in the history of German thought, inasmuch as it shows us the effect which the *Critique of the Pure Reason* was producing upon a mind formed in another school, but prepared by many of its own processes to recognize and appreciate those through which Kant had passed and was conducting his readers. Kant's efforts to limit the operations of the understanding by its conceptions, and to deny to it any power of perceiving the reality of things, obtain an immediate welcome from Jacobi. But Kant seems to deny the possibility of reaching reality by *any* method; *faith,* according to him, must be an assurance of that which *appears,* or a confidence in some deductions from *appearances.* To such a statement Jacobi, we need not say, was resolutely hostile. He admitted afterwards that he had not perceived how much was involved in Kant's distinction between the Understanding and the Reason; when he read the *Criticism on the Practical Reason,* which was not published till after his dialogue, he found that a great part of what he demanded had been conceded. Still the Königsberg mode of contemplating

truth was very different from his, and he felt the difference the more keenly for the great and increasing admiration with which Kant inspired him.

The correspondence with Mendelssohn, *Werke*, 4th Band, p. 209.

The Jew and the Christian.

p. 210.

Faith is the witness of the senses.

Christian beliefs.

128. For both the reasons we have assigned we should be glad to dwell a little on this conversation between *Ich* and *Er*. But paramount to any British interest or German interest is the strong human interest of certain passages in the previous correspondence with Mendelssohn. "Your course of argument," says the learned Jew, "is quite in the spirit of your religion, which imposes upon you the duty of crushing doubt by faith. The Christian philosopher may find his amusement in mocking the naturalist—in irritating him with a display of all the difficulties which, like Jack o' Lanterns, tempt him from one corner of the road to another, and elude continually his efforts to seize them. *My* religion recognizes no duty to remove such doubts otherwise than by arguments of reason—commands no faith in eternal verities." "Dear Mendelssohn"—it is thus that Jacobi replies—"we are all born in faith, and must abide in faith, just as we are all born in society, and must abide in society. . . . Through faith we know that we have a body, and that without us there exist other bodies and other thinking natures,—a true and wonderful revelation. For we have not only the feeling of our own body fashioned in one way or another; whilst we feel it to be so fashioned, we become aware, not only of changes in it, but also of something altogether distinct from it. We cannot call it mere feeling; we cannot call it mere thought; we are conscious of other things; yes, and with the very same certainty wherewith we are conscious of ourselves, for without 'Thou' is there no 'I.' Thus we have a *revelation of nature;* one which not merely commands, but forces us to believe, and through the belief to take in eternal verities. Another belief is *taught* by the Christian religion—not *commanded.* A belief which has for its object, not eternal verities, but the finite changeable nature of men. It instructs man how he may obtain dispositions by means of which his existence may be ennobled—through the aid of which he may exalt himself to a higher life, to a higher consciousness, and by that consciousness to a higher knowledge. He who accepts this promise marches faithfully onward towards its fulfilment; he has the faith which blesses. The glorious Teacher of this faith, in whom all its promises were fulfilled, could therefore truly say, '*I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.* And whoso doeth the will which is in me shall experience that my doctrine is of God.' This, then, is the spirit of my religion; the man becomes, through a divine life, percipient of God, and that perception imparts a peace of God which is higher than all reason;

in him dwells the enjoyment and apprehension of an incomprehensible love. Love is life, life itself; and only this kind of love distinguishes each kind of living natures."

Pascal's dictum.

129. Jacobi adopted as his maxim the celebrated saying of Pascal—"Nature confounds the Pyrrhonists, reason confounds the Dogmatists. We have an incapacity of proving which is invincible by all dogmatism. We have an idea which is invincible by all pyrrhonism." But what had become of this idea of truth? Had it any hold of the generation to which Jacobi belonged? Could philosophy receive it? He makes a very grave, eloquent, and somewhat sorrowful answer, which shall conclude our chapter on the age before the French revolution. "Can a living philosophy," he asks, "be ever anything else than a history? . . . What has procured for the doctrine of a Diderot or a Helvetius such rapid, secret, universal acceptance? Nothing but this, that their doctrine actually comprehends in itself the truth of the century. What they said came from the heart, and must needs go to the heart. . . . Philosophy cannot create its material; that lies in the history of the present or of the past. Out of foregone history we philosophize but poorly, for it contains experiences which we cannot repeat. Only of that which lies before us do we judge with any confidence. What is spread out before any given period it can observe and dissect. It can compare the parts which it has dissected; can arrange them; can reduce them to their simplest principles; can find continually more striking and satisfactory tests of those principles; can use with ever-increasing energy the powers which are discovered by them. In this sense every period may be said to possess as well its own truth, which is the content of its different experiences, as its own living philosophy, which exhibits the predominant methods of action of that period in their connection and progress. If this is so, it follows that the acts of men cannot be so well deduced from their philosophy as their philosophy from their actions; that their history does not start from their habit of thinking, but their habit of thinking from their history. It would be a mistake, for instance, to explain the corrupt morality of the Romans at the time of the fall of the Republic by the irreligion which was then so widely diffused; on the contrary, the source of that widely spread irreligion must be sought in the morals. It is equally true that we must not charge the lewdness and debauchery of the contemporaries of an Ovid, or Petronius, Catullus, or a Martial, to the account of these writers; rather we should attribute what we find in the poets to that lewdness and debauchery. At the same time I am far enough from denying that poets and philosophers, if they are themselves penetrated and possessed by the spirit of their time, do mightily

p. 234.

The materials of a philosophy.

What an age can do and not do.

Philosophy grows out of actions.

The habits of a time mould the writers of a time.

sustain and cultivate it. Human history is formed by men, though one contributes more, another less, to its movements.

Possibility of a reformation.

If then the philosophy—the scheme of thought in an age—is to be reformed, its history, its method of action, the whole course of its life must be reformed, which does not come to pass at our pleasure. This truth seems to have dawned upon many worthy men, and to have led them to the conclusion, since they cannot accomplish much with us old folk, that they must lay hold on our children, in hopes of forming out of them a better generation.

Hopes from education how far reasonable.

The undertaking is not easy; there is this special obstruction to it—that we fathers cannot admit that a way may be found for our offspring which is better than the one which we have esteemed the best. These enlightened men must also tempt us by the assurance that our children shall be brought up in a practical way, to meet the needs of the age or, to change the words, according to the taste and mind of the century.

The mammon worship of the century.

But if the mind and taste of the century are directed simply to outward prosperity, to the means of attaining this—riches, rank, power; and if these objects cannot be pursued with the whole heart and soul except by driving the best qualities of human nature into such a corner that their very existence is forgotten, the effect of this practical education, if it be carried on skilfully and scientifically, will be to make our posterity admirably quick and ready for an ever-increasingly rapid progress in evil; and thus, instead of a peace of God, which is a mere chimera, there will be an actual peace of the devil, the preliminaries of which, one has good reason to think, have been already settled.

The peace of the devil.

We shudder instead when this treaty is openly set forth to us. Uprightness, patriotism, benevolence, fear of God—we wish to have all these—only, first and foremost of all, prosperity; complete aptitude for the service of vanity; we wish to be rich, but without falling into temptation or a snare; in short, we hope to see the sentences proved to be false,—No man *can serve two masters;* and *Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

The genesis of good.

. . . Out of the enjoyment of virtue arises the idea of one who is virtuous; out of the enjoyment of freedom springs the idea of a free man; out of the enjoyment of life, the idea of one who is living; out of the enjoyment of the godlike, the idea of one who is godlike, and of God. As the living philosophy, or the mode of thinking in a people, arises out of its history or its manner of life, so does its history depend upon that out of which it springs—upon institutions and laws. . . .

Obedience before intellect.

Look at thy children, or at the children of thy friend. If they are contradictory and intractable they will not be conscious of the father's mind; they will not truly know the father. If they are obedient, the father's mind, his inner life, enters into them; their understanding is awakened, they know the father. No art of education, no instruction was capable of bringing them to this point till the living knowledge grew out of the life. The understanding in men always comes in the rear. Modesty and gentle breeding must precede instruction, obedience must precede knowledge." And then he quotes these old words, "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone. He setteth an end to darkness, and searcheth out all perfection: the stones of darkness, and the shadow of death. The flood breaketh out from the inhabitant; even the waters forgotten of the foot: they are dried up, they are gone away from men. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire. The stones of it are the place of sapphires; and it hath dust of gold. There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it; nor the fierce lion passed by it. He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots. He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing. He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me; and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls; for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding? seeing it is hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close from the fowls of the air. Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears. God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof. For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven; to make the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. When he made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightning of the thunder; then did he see it, and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

The old philosophy.

CHAPTER X.

GLIMPSE INTO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The end of the age.

1. THUS spoke a sage of the eighteenth century, mourning over his time, looking with fear and hope into the time that was approaching. The words of Job were fitting to the occasion which called forth his letters, for those letters were addressed to a Jew. They were fitting for a man who thought that faith is needful to the seeker after truth, and that truth must reveal itself if the faith of the seeker is to have any ground.

The new time.

2. Jacobi's quotation seems to us the best conclusion which we can find for this sketch of moral and metaphysical inquiries. We are far indeed from saying that those inquiries terminated with the French revolution. We believe that some of the most vital and pregnant of them may be traced to that event, and have occupied the different nations in the time which has succeeded it. Hereafter we hope that some historian will arise who will do full justice to those inquiries, to the men who were engaged in them, to the influence which they exerted over their age, to the influence which their age exerted over them. We believe that we shall help that future historian best if we try to gather some of the lessons which we have learned from former periods, especially from that period of which Jacobi has been speaking to us; if we point out very briefly the directions in which we suppose that philosophy has been moving during these last seventy years; if we ask what is the direction which it must take in the days that are to follow ours.

The guide to philosophy.

3. We have throughout adopted the maxim of the passage in Job, that the search after wisdom, after the place of understanding, is a divinely inspired search, that in which man was especially intended to engage, that which is not to be confounded with the search for the veins of silver or for the rivers that are cut out among the rocks, noble as that search is; which above all is not to be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. In whatsoever country or age men have desired wisdom more than these, in whatsoever country or age they have pursued it in despite of the temptations which these have held out to them, there we have confessed that a divine power and impulse were manifesting themselves, there we have

perceived that men were struggling to be men, because God was awakening them to the struggle, and guiding them in it. There we have seen, too, that the study of nature became profoundly interesting, and was pursued with ardour and fidelity, just because man did not bow to nature as his lord, because he believed that he himself was not one of the things that merely grow and die.

Subjects of philosophy.

Metaphysics.

4. Thus the study of morals or manners, of that which properly belongs to the human being as distinct from all other creatures, became closely connected with the study of metaphysics, of that which is above nature, which is not subject to the law of growth and decay, which is permanent and substantial. Throughout our history we have seen how the one study involved and suggested the other. The vicissitudes of manners in different ages and countries forced the inquiry whether there is a standard of morals for all ages and all countries; if there is this standard, can it be sought amongst those vicissitudes? Can it be a mere generalization from them? Where is it to be found? On the other hand, the metaphysician has a grand dream of Being and of Unity. He ascends into a region utterly above man, apart from man. How can he bring his dream near him? How can it have any relation to him? Unless Being is identical with the Right, unless the Right is a right which determines his acts, he must discard metaphysics; they cannot mean anything to him.

Attempt to cast them off

By all doctors of the century.

5. The philosophers from Locke to Kant inclusive laboured hard to overthrow metaphysics. That which was necessary for man was to know himself. He must study the operations and conditions of his own understanding—under what terms he could live with his fellows in society. To penetrate into the supernatural world was not his business; whatever tidings he could get of it that might seem to be credible, he should be thankful for; if they helped him to be a better citizen, by all means let him adopt them; if they gave him any hopes or awakened any fears as to his position in a future state, he must consider whether those hopes and fears were well or ill founded. But let him not suppose that he has any grasp of substances. If he likes to call that substance which his eyes and hands converse with, he may make the most of that. But there are great doubts whether *it* is a substance; what is there in him which can bring him into contact with any other? So far Locke, the denier, and Kant, the assertor, of *à priori* principles, are of one mind; so far Bentham, who could tolerate no doctrine but that of the greatest happiness of the greater number, and Kant, who repudiated Eudæmonism as the degradation of morality, are of one mind.

6. But can Locke, or Bentham, or Kant, avoid metaphysics

Their failure.

Locke.

Bentham.

Kant.

while they hold fast their moral maxim? Locke, contending for the reasonableness of the Christian religion, commenting on the Bible, admits, in some sense or other, a communication from the supernatural world to ourselves, and a corresponding possibility, in some sense, of man holding communication with it. All cannot be psychology; all is not limited to the discoveries which he can make of his relations to the outward and visible world. And that communication from the invisible world has, by the very doctrine of Locke, a special bearing on morality—in fact, chiefly bears on that—has little to do with anything else. Bentham is not liable to this inconsistency; but he must either directly in his own person, or by availing himself of the arguments of his master, Hume, show that there is not, and cannot be, any such relation between us and the invisible world as will affect our social condition or our individual morality. He must, that is to say, leave the mere utilitarian dogmas of the *Essay on the Principles of Morals* for the abstract arguments of Hume's strictly metaphysical treatises, before the former can be regarded as in any degree safe. With Kant, we have seen, the case is stronger. To assert that Law which he finds indispensable to his moral existence, he must apparently violate his own canons; he must claim for the practical Reason a power of looking into realities—into things as they are—which he has denied to the speculative.

Morality not the better.

Popular cry for metaphysics.

7. Jacobi will have told us how much the practical morality of the people in this eighteenth century gained by the effort to banish everything metaphysical from their thoughts and their life. And the history of each nation—of our own, and of Germany almost equally—will tell us that the main counteraction to that general worship of prosperity and of gold which he laments, was found in the demand of many who were not prosperous, who had little gold and little chance of getting any, for something metaphysical, which the preachers and doctors of the day had deemed equally unsuitable to the vulgar and to themselves. Whilst a righteous cry was ascending to heaven against the theocrátic pretensions of the priests in different lands, there was an equally loud and distinct cry for some testimony of a God who was living then and was not less concerned for men than in the days of old. Nature did not satisfy men if it satisfied philosophers. They must have something above nature. And that which was above nature must speak to them, must seek to raise them above its oppressions. They could become responsible beings only upon that condition.

The natural and the voluntary.

8. Strangely did the natural and the supernatural; the passionate appeal to natural rights, the claim for a freedom which nature could not give; the disposition to shake off all moral

obligations, the assertion of a morality higher than monarchs and ecclesiastics had confessed; struggle with each other in the Walpurgis night of the French revolution. And strangely did that struggle express itself in the philosophy which was born of the revolution.

First period (1798-1815).

It had the same character during all those wonderful twenty-five years which elapsed between the taking of the Bastille and the final overthrow of Napoleon. The movements of thought in Germany, in France, in England, during that period were all different, each stamped with the national character. The questioners in each country were opposed to each other, often in deadly hostility to each other. It was not a time of peace, but of war, in the world and in the schools. It was not a time for providing such entertainment as the eighteenth century had provided, quiet pictures of manners, graceful well-composed poems and essays. Everywhere there was a demand for something that bore upon life, which connected itself with conflict. Past ages were not forgotten, but those who belonged to them must come clad in armour. Philosophers were one-sided, but they followed their own courses of thought bravely and fearlessly. And each of those courses of thought really exhibited some striving of man that was only converted afterwards into a system of doctrine.

Fichte.

Fichte, combining the enthusiasm of the French revolution with a cordial acceptance of the lessons he had learnt in Königsberg, was from the beginning of his life to the end of it asking what was needful to make *him* a free man—to enable *him* to do the work which he had to do—to be what he was meant to be. He was sure that he could find the answer to that question. He said boldly that neither he nor any man could find the answer to any other. What was not himself he must leave. It sounded like atheistical doctrine. People said it *was* atheistical doctrine.

How he pursues his principle.

But in demanding what was needful to make him true, he found that he needed a true God. His rivals charged him with inconsistency. He had taken into his doctrine that which did not belong to it—he was borrowing from them. That did not signify. He must have what he required. That was his consistency. He was happy not only in the nobleness of his life, but in the opportunity of his death. He died just as his country became free—before it was again reduced into slavery by monarchs and system-mongers.

Schelling

Schelling was destined to a much longer probation. He was the thinker who most denounced Fichte's method and Fichte's departures from his own maxims. For he had been led to feel profoundly the worth of that which Fichte ignored—the worth of a method which he thought impossible. He could not start from that which he is, or thinks, or knows, or believes. He could not forget that a whole world is presented to us. He must proceed from that which is given; he must see how that affects the man, meets the demands of the man, prevents him from losing himself in himself. He must have a Nature philosophy. That, Schelling thinks, will include all things, be the end of all things. Is not that atheism? cry his opponents. Is not Nature taking the place of God? He replies to them vehemently, contemptuously. He does not want to make all the shifting forms of nature into God. There is a Being working through these, working behind them. To know that Being is what man requires. He must have an object for all his search. That Object cannot only be an Object. It must be a Subject—thinking as well as thought of. In that confession of a Subject-Object is a depth which a Nature philosophy might disclose, but which it could not contain. It must, as some of Schelling's critics said—at first exciting only his scorn by the remark—lie beyond the bounds of philosophy; it must be that which philosophy asks for. Perhaps Schelling may have discovered afterwards, or partly discovered, that they were right. If he did, it was by faithfully pursuing his inquiry as far as it would go, by holding fast to the thought that man's first demand is for a revelation of something. If of a Subject-Object, perhaps "some*thing*" does not exactly meet the demand; perhaps the thing will not be able to reveal itself or to make *persons* know what is revealed. We are not careful to inquire what the conclusions were at which Schelling ultimately arrived. He often angrily discouraged the attempts of his disciples and of his opponents to explain those conclusions; not unnaturally or unreasonably, it seems to us, if he felt that the explanations were to be fitted into a compact system, and if he knew that what he had done, supposing he had done anything, was to point to that which is, or to Him who is, above all systems—to the only ground as well as the only end of knowledge.

Being and Becoming.

The Subject-Object.

Later stage of Schelling's philosophy.

9. It is clear, at all events, that we are once more in that ocean of Being which our guides of the eighteenth century were so anxious that we should avoid. Being and Not Being, Being and Becoming, are, as in the days of Plato, the watchwords which will be rung in our ears; to which we may shut our ears if we please, but which will encounter us when we least expect them; which have not been brought back by men eager to revive the lore of past days, but by those who are working in the present and for the present; to which we have been driven in trying to *escape* from mere school formulas, to realize our connection with the actual world as we see it. Gladly would we have reposed in nature and her beautiful vicissitudes. She forbade us to repose; she pointed us to something fixed and unchangeable, which she was trying to express, and could not. Yes, *could not*,

Passage out of Nature.

Hegel.

Logic.

said one who was first a fellow-worker, afterwards a rival of Schelling; for is not this absolute substance nearer to us than to nature? Do not the forms of logic, asked Hegel, point to it more directly than the forms of the outward world? There may be a useful study of those forms. The movements of human history may merit our attention; but must there not be a dialectic which rises above such pursuits? Must not that bring us into immediate contact with that which nothing can measure or include—which must be the measure of us and of all things?

Plato's dialectic.

His completeness.

The Absolute.

10. That the thought of such a dialectic had dawned upon Plato, that he had hoped by it to disengage himself from the idols of sense and the confusions of intellectual sophistry, we have heard. How much it was associated in his mind with the practical questions of Socrates, how fearful he was of separating it from them, we have often had occasion to observe. That the appearance of such a dialectic to settle all things in the latest age, should have startled and alarmed those who knew from history what attempts had been made in other ages to bring heaven and earth within the terms of the intellect, and what had come of those attempts, we cannot wonder. Schelling had particularly little sympathy with a doctrine which seemed to combine all that he had complained of in Fichte's exaltation of the human above the natural, with all the inhumanity that had been imputed to himself. Schleiermacher, who had always reverenced Plato in connection with Socrates as the seeker of wisdom, not as the possessor of it, would of course fear Hegel as the great subverter of that idea of philosophy, as well as upon other grounds to which we may allude presently. Nevertheless there were those who discovered in Hegel the reconciler of Fichte and Schelling in a higher and more complete system—who supposed that he had attained what they only aimed at. And there were those who denied that he meant to bring the Absolute within the limits of a system—who said that he saw in it the ground of all systems. And then the question arose—A dead ground or a living ground? Is it something? is it nothing? Or more than something—the very opposite of nothing? Those who have gone with us into the history of the mystical as well as the scholastical philosophy will not be surprised that these questions should have drawn very different answers from different disciples, and that each should have been able to plead the authority of the Master. It is not for us to determine which was right, when both may have been right and both wrong. A man asking for truth may bow before an absolute Being, in whom he lives and moves and is; may believe that that Being speaks *to* him, in some way also speaks *in* him; may have the glimpse of a living uniting name into which little children may be baptized. The

same man may aspire to bring all things under his conception of Being and Unity till system becomes his god. Awaking from that horror, he may gaze into the abyss of Being and Unity until it fades into what he can only *call* Nothingness, and yet which may mean to him, may actually be to him, an object of faith and adoration. It was so in the fourteenth century. If history teaches us the differences of the ages, does it not teach us also of their resemblance? May not the wants, temptations, wisdom, follies of thinking men in the nineteenth century be more like those of other centuries than we are wont to suppose?

Schleiermacher.

His need of a religion.

A personal God.

Intellect and feeling.

11. Hegel belongs to the fifteen years of struggle for freedom at the beginning of the century. He belongs perhaps more characteristically to the fifteen years of repression and of system which followed those. Schleiermacher lived through both; but the character of his mind and of his influence marks him as more at home in the earlier period than the later. The Moravian discipline in which he had been brought up was unsatisfying to his intellect; it did not meet the doubts respecting the sacred records which were awake in his time, and which affected him. But it left a deep impression on his heart. By degrees the two demands of the heart and the intellect became more distinguished in him than they have perhaps ever been in any man. His heart must have a religion. It must resign itself absolutely, unreservedly to God. At first the all-embracing divinity of Spinoza seemed to meet his needs. He could repose in that. As his personal necessities deepened, as the troubles of his country deepened, he became more conscious that he must have a personal Being upon whom he could cast his own burden and the world's burden. He believed with all his heart in such a Being. He set him forth to his fellows as the only home for their spirits, the guide of their conduct. A very present helper he sought and found, and led numbers who were weary of systems of divinity to seek and find. But apparently no one with so much of this faith cared less for a history of the divine acts; no one was more perplexed by a revelation which imported to come in the form of a history, to discover first the divine King of a nation, then the divine Head of all nations. What he found in that revelation which answered to the cravings of his heart and of human hearts he accepted; that belonged to religion. The rest concerned the intellect; it might be dealt with merely by the intellect. On the other hand, no man was so impatient of any speech about the absolute; what had that to do with man? It was not the God his affections were seeking. Let whatever the human being wants for his senses, his understanding, his inmost spirit, be confessed and prized. Let all else go, whether theologians or philosophers have provided it.

The second period (1815-1830).
Systematic tendencies.
History.
The third period (1830-1850).
Idealism.

12. We have said that such a habit of mind was evidently formed in the age of search—of philosophy, strictly so called—was evidently uncongenial to a systematic age. When Schleiermacher came into that age he was obliged to present himself in a negative aspect, showing how he differed from the formal theologians of his time, how he differed from the formal philosophers. So, like all others in Germany, he must have a school. But his living influence—his positive influence—had, we apprehend, little to do with his notions or his school. It proceeded from the man himself —from his inward faith and his visible works. And another time was coming, different from that first period of inquiry, from that second period of system, which would try how far this merely personal influence could suffice for his country's needs. The counteraction of the diseased passion for system lay in the historical spirit which had been cultivated in Germany during the years in which this passion was strongest. The records of nations had been studied in that spirit of living, not dogmatic, criticism of which Lessing had set the example. The historical was carefully distinguished from the fabulous; but the fabulous was not treated with contempt. It expressed the ideas of the people who had accepted it, often it explained the very meaning of their institutions. Vico's seeds were bearing fruit in Germany; they had been carefully reared by German learning. What might not be made of this hint? Why should not it be applied to all histories in which the supernatural was blended? That element need not be overlooked as the naturalists of the eighteenth century had overlooked it. It could not be explained by mere natural phenomena. It indicated the spiritual desires of man. He had always been disposed to make demigods; to raise his demigods to the highest throne of all. Was not that the key to all supposed revelations? Might it not be applied with especial effect to the Christian revelation, seeing that assumed to be an historical one? Did not modern criticism furnish the means of separating the ideal from the historical as they had never been separated before?

Strauss's *Leben Jesu.*

13. These notions, working for a long time secretly, were brought to their full exhibition and trial in the *Leben Jesu* of Strauss. That work was not produced till Hegel and Schleiermacher were both dead. It grew out of a state of circumstances different from that in which they had been fashioned. But it brought the question with which they had been occupied, with which all German philosophy since Kant had been occupied, to a climax and an issue. Men believed of old that a real Being, an absolute and eternal Being, had spoken to them in a Son, one with Him in nature, who took the nature of man, who revealed Him in that nature, who redeemed men from a terrible bondage to

The question of the time.

Conclusions as to Germany.

Aims of its philosophy.

Impossibility of going back to the former period.

The ideas of the reason.

evil, who made them God's children, who endowed them with God's Spirit. Was this merely a conception or dream? Is it the verity of verities? German philosophy had forced this question upon Germany—upon all countries as well as Germany. Strauss perceived it to be *the* question which was latent in every part of that philosophy, which must have a solution, that it may not be a mere abortion or series of abortions. And because we agree with him that this question is involved in all that philosophy, therefore we hail it in every one of its steps. (1.) As a practical philosophy, that is to say, one which concerns human beings and their deepest interests. (2.) As a philosophy which has been like all others divinely kindled and awakened for the highest purposes. Turn where we will we perceive a tendency to seek after the Infinite and Eternal. From whatever point the inquirer starts—however he may desire to avoid what appears to lie wholly beyond the scope and capacities of his nature—he is urged on; he finds himself confronted by that which he cannot measure or comprehend. He may be warned by the philosophers whom he reverences most, to avoid a region in which he can make no way; he may encounter the scoffs of the practical, the indignation of the professional, theologian. He may care only to find what is needful for himself. He may resolve to fix that as the limit of his inquiry. But he must advance. He may long for that eighteenth century time when it was possible to debate about the immortality of the soul, the freedom of the will, the being of God, as if these were merely topics lying afar off from him. But ever since he has been told that the ideas of freedom, immortality, God, are implied in the very existence of his reason—ever since the conviction has dawned upon him that in some sense that must be true—these ideas have stood in fearful proximity to him. What is this freedom? Is it an intolerable curse, or the human privilege and glory? What is this immortality? Is it a horrible evil which a man must try to shake off—a burden which he must, if he can, forget? Or is it the opposite of death—the life of each person, the life which binds him to his race? And both these questions terminate in that other more awful one. And is He to whom my reason bows a creature of that reason? Is He a part of it? Has the imagination of man been perpetually busy in making likenesses of that which is not; of a conception which he has called into existence, and which without him could not be? Or does the Reason ask that if He is He should show to it what He is? Does it ask that there should be some Person in whom He may make himself known? If there were such a Person, might not He bring life and immortality to light? Might not He break those fetters which interfere with the actual freedom of man, which make him often long to be rid of his freedom? These are the questions which German philosophy has raised. Do we require that *it* should answer them? Can we require that, if we believe that wisdom is not a mere generalization—that it dwells in a Person?

France in its first period.

14. If the years since the French revolution have given this direction to thought in Germany, what direction have they given to thought in France itself? The first Napoleon, as we all know, was wont to express unmitigated scorn of idealists and philosophers generally. He was seeking to reconstruct society, to introduce whatever elements, civil or ecclesiastical, were necessary or convenient to complete a military despotism. The discouragement of thought was more favourable to the growth of thought than the patronage of it would have been. Those who would have talked of their ideas sought to understand the world about them. It was a chaos. Was this empire the creation that was to come out of it? Had, then, society no constitution of its own, only one that was put upon it, or put into it? History must be studied for an answer to that question. It was found that the philosophical historians had not exhausted the past. There was something in it which they had not seen, which their formulas did not represent. These reflections led some into a vehement reaction against the tenets of the eighteenth century school; whatever was most opposed to that school, whatever it had denounced, had sacredness and worth. But there were other men who perceived that the eighteenth century could as little be abolished as those centuries which it had sought to abolish; who, therefore, in good earnest, set themselves to consider the different ages, what each had done, what each had left another to do. Whatever might be wanting in such inquiries, whatever might be the ultimate issue of them, those who engaged in them were obliged to take account of a multitude of spiritual influences which their predecessors had overlooked; they were obliged to give these great prominence in considering how a European society had been held together, how modern civilisation had been produced.

The empire

History.

Spiritual influences in society.

15. These thoughts were ripening during the time of imperial repression; the modern French school of history was learning its first lessons in that time. Other men were studying out of a different book. The fearful degradation and disorder of a peasantry which had once hoped to share universal freedom—which had been the victim of the dream of universal conquest—awakened the conscience and heart of Fourier, set him to meditate on the conditions of human society. Visions of principles of attraction between men, like those which keep material bodies in

Fourier.

one, rose before him; if society exists, if it is not only a name, they could not be all visions. The natural might blend confusedly with the voluntary in his speculations; the law of things might be confounded with the law of humanity; but must there not be an analogy between them? Could one be less true than the other?

Second period (1815-1830).

16. The years after the restoration in France had some of the same indications with those which we have noticed during the same period in Germany. The historical impulse was not less vigorous, but it began to exhibit itself more in philosophical formulas, in theories about different ages and races. The impulse to social inquiries was not less strong; but Fourier, and all others who engaged in them, must elaborate the principles which they have seen working in society into systems; they must cease to be perceivers and become constructors.

Importance of sensation.

Still more remarkable is this change in what some would call the department of pure philosophy. During the former period there had been a powerful reaction against the Condillac doctrines, which had been pushed to their utmost limit by Dr. Cabanis. Reid had been earnestly studied. Consciousness had been discovered to be deeper than sensation. Then Madame de Staël and others had brought reports out of Germany, imperfect enough but still exciting, of what Kant, Jacobi, Fichte, and Schelling had been saying and thinking. Not merely the love of something that was new and strange was awakened. These hints of German thoughts encountered and completed certain thoughts which were stirring among Frenchmen.

Cousin.

Victor Cousin, one of the ablest and most eloquent men of our time, or of any time, went into Germany, encountered the wrath of the Prussian monarch, formed the acquaintance of Hegel. There was a charm to the accomplished Frenchman in so grand and perfect a science as his. He could import ontology as well as psychology into France, could present both in language as clear and delightful as Hegel's was often crabbed and dark, could convince Frenchmen that they might be the expounders of a nineteenth century philosophy to Europe, as they had been of an eighteenth. Other and far greater services, we think, M. Cousin has rendered to philosophy than the most complete system of ontology could be.

Ontology in France.

He has travelled through the past ages, and besides representing in his own perhaps too lucid and brilliant expositions the thoughts of great men of the old and new world, has taken vast pains that they should speak for themselves, has applied his own industry and genius, as well as that of his scholars, to the collation of their texts and the recovery of their relics. In spite of these claims upon our gratitude, we must be permitted to hold that the facility of a learned Frenchman in arranging and classifying all past and present thoughts and beliefs would have had a killing effect upon those thoughts and beliefs, if a change had not come over the spirit of France at the same time and, in many respects, of the same kind as that which came over the spirit of Germany.

Practical time (1830-1848).

Social tendencies of France.

St. Simonism.

Comte.

New worship.

17. That change is connected with the event which raised M. Cousin from an almost proscribed man into honourable and useful employments under Government—the Revolution of 1830. The direction of the philosopher's mind to practical purposes, as illustrated in his valuable inquiries respecting the education of different nations, indicates, it seems to us, the line in which the energies of Frenchmen were to exert themselves. It had already been shown by many tokens that questions concerning the needs and the order of society were the far more natural occupation of their country than any ontological speculations, with whatever talent and zeal they might be prosecuted. Almost without being aware of it, Frenchmen appear to be thinking of society when they are talking of the most abstract questions; to be dwelling secretly upon *its* being and upon *its* unity when the words Being and Unity are on their lips, and they are trying to give the words the sense which they bear in Aristotle or in Hegel. But society may be contemplated from a metaphysical or from an earthly point of view. The divine and the secular have been combined in all times; they were never more closely combined than at this time. Visions of a universal Church and a universal Bank rose together before the St. Simonians. Principles of theology and arrangements of political economy appeared to be identical. The reaction followed. An acute philosopher, a disciple of the school of St. Simon, discovered that the divine belongs wholly to the early ages of the world; psychological and ontological questions to a later period; positive philosophy, or that which only deals with outward phenomena and the laws of nature, to the latest and consummate period. Worship, it seemed, was for ever to be banished from the world; all questions that have ever troubled men about their own spiritual condition were to disappear with it. But M. Comte proved a rebel to his own decrees. Positive philosophy, he found, wanted the completion of love, and love must bring back worship. All acknowledgment of any absolute Being is indeed dead. *That* belongs to the old times; but the goddess of humanity must be enthroned in our day. She requires a priesthood, and to that it would seem that men can only be initiated through some painful inward conflicts. A result surely to be considered and reflected upon for what it declares and for what it indicates. However few may join in this outward worship of humanity,

there can be little doubt that the feeling of a humanity, of some wide universal fellowship, has been working in France ever since its revolution—has expressed itself in cries for a universal brotherhood and for a universal empire—in demands for the liberty of all classes and colours, and in schemes for the enslaving of all at home and abroad. It is expressing itself now, among those who have the least sympathy for the Comtian philosophy, in dreams of a popedom which is necessary to bind all families and nations into one. We have not quite done with psychology or even with theology yet. The question which Strauss has shown to be the outcome of all German dialectics is also the question which is arising in another shape out of all the social philosophy of France. "Is there any Person in whom the divine and the human meet—any Head of humanity who was not created by its wants or its imagination, but who makes known to man that eternal and absolute Being whom by no searchings of his own he can find out?"

Centre of humanity.

England.

18. If Germany and France in this century have insisted that philosophy should not be professional and formal, but should occupy itself with the common interests of human beings, we may surely expect that demand to be not less decided in practical England. If we look over a course of years, and consider what thinkers have had any real and permanent influence over England, we shall find that our anticipation has not been belied. One or two instances of temporary popularity might seem to confute it. Dugald Stewart reigned for some years the chief of those psychologists whose works it behoved all who were completing a liberal education to read, and all who were forming a library to buy. They were written in a graceful style; they excited no prejudices in any school, political or religious. All critics commended them—those whose praise was most helpful to establish a reputation, the most. The amiable and humane character of the author added weight to his words. They were unsatisfactory only to the man who wished to know what he was, whence he had come, whither he was going. They were *about* philosophy; they were not inquiries after wisdom in one direction or another. On the other hand, Jeremy Bentham and Samuel Taylor Coleridge were despised by the critics; their names were tabooed by Whig and Tory coteries; they were denounced in religious circles; their works were unprofitable to the booksellers, were apparently neglected by the public. A few years after the death of those three men a writer, perhaps the most competent in England to estimate their influence, and as impartial as he is able, forgets to mention Stewart, and reckons Bentham and Coleridge as the men who have contributed most to form the mind of the age. The explanation, we believe, is that

Dugald Stewart.

Bentham and Coleridge.

they did not write about philosophy, but that each brought what philosophy he had to bear upon the topics which were most occupying his countrymen, upon which the young most asked for guidance.

The Transcendentalist.

19. That the power of Bentham lay in his vigorous application of a principle to details, we have said already. Some of our readers may be astonished that we assert for Coleridge also the title of a practical as contradistinguished from a professional philosopher. Was he not essentially a Transcendentalist? Was it not his main, though unsuccessful, desire to recommend Kant to his countrymen? Did he not learn much from Schelling? It is perfectly true that the poet, who had been filled with all the fears and hopes with which the French revolution inspired young men, who had dreamt of an American pantisocracy, who had seen his visions vanish and Napoleon enthroned, did at a certain time of his life become a metaphysician. The reason and the effect of that course are expressed with the bitterness of self-reproach in his ode on *Dejection*—

"So not to think of what I needs must feel,
  But to be still and patient all I can,
And haply by abstruse research to steal
  From my own nature all the natural man,
  This was my sole resource, my only plan,
Till what befits a part infects the whole,
And now has almost grown the habit of my soul."

Practical use of philosophy.

The *Friend*.

The leading maxim.

Nevertheless, this abstruse student wrote in newspapers about the events of the war, the conduct and character of our ministers, and the government of France. And when he did begin in his *Friend* to make some use of his German lore, so far from producing a systematic philosophical treatise, he gave his critics good ground for complaining that his Essays were fragmentary and upon all possible subjects. That Mr. Mill should recognize the effect of a book so miscellaneous, so informal, increases the value of his testimony, and affords another proof of his singular equity; for a mind so compact and orderly as his must have been long in persuading itself that a writer apparently without a plan could have made any deep impression; above all, could have inaugurated a method of thought. Those, indeed, who learnt, and still learn, from the *Friend*, perceive that it had one main purpose; that whether Coleridge discussed questions of art or questions of ethics, or—what have the largest place in the book—questions of politics, he was seeking to distinguish between those principles which are universal, which belong to one man as much as another, and those rules and maxims which are generalized from experience. Having this end in view he accepted Kant's distinction between the understanding and the reason as of inestimable worth. That distinction explained, he thought, the confusions into which the authors of the French declaration of rights and their English admirers had fallen. They had mixed together the universal and the particular, the laws of the Reason and the deductions of the Understanding. The maxims belonging to the one sphere, which were local and temporary, were invested with the sacredness and largeness of the other. Therefore national limits had been effaced, all customs, traditions, beliefs, had been treated as unnecessary. Yet the universal principles had not been asserted. A false universality had been substituted for the true. An imperial universality had been the outcome of the universal equality and fraternity. So Coleridge vindicated the experimental maxims of Burke, while he vindicated also the deep underground principles of society which Burke had been afraid to look into. He believed that these ought to be investigated; that the politician must recognize them if he is not to sail without chart or compass; that the man must recognize them if he is to be an honest and intelligent citizen.

Reason and experience.

Influence of Coleridge.

20. What we have said may help to remove the impression that any part of Coleridge's influence arose from the unpractical qualities of his mind. Just in proportion as he yielded to these, or they prevailed over him, his influence was weakened. Whatever has been said, or may be said, to the contrary, he exercised *no* power through them. It was only by being in contact with the actual things which other men were thinking of, and with the thoughts which those things were awakening, that he gained a hearing in any quarter. He might, as has been alleged, discourse to admiring listeners upon topics which were utterly unintelligible and indifferent to them, which nothing but his eloquence could have made them think that they cared for. If so, it is quite certain that that eloquence was not the source of that power to which Mr. Mill bears witness. Few of those who felt that power probably ever listened to his spoken words. Those words would have been wasted upon them, would have excited indignation in them, if they were, as it has been reported that they were, only beautiful cloud shapes, phantoms from the land of dreams. Young Englishmen of that day had enough of these phantoms; if their own land did not supply them, the Stewart philosophy was close at hand. They were longing for something substantial. Only those who could guide them to that would ever establish more than a momentary dominion over them.

Not hindered by unintelligible discourse

21. But if the first of the characteristics which we discovered

Did England resemble Germany in the pursuit of the Infinite?

in other countries was found also here, can we see any traces of the second? Germans and Frenchmen, trained in the eighteenth century school—taught from their youth that the business of philosophy was to keep the Infinite and the Eternal out of sight, to prohibit any approaches into that region, to expose the absurdity of all institutions which had been grounded on the assumption that it had some relation to the region of human thought and action—had been led, in the course of their philosophical researches, to feel after the Infinite, to declare that they could not pursue their inquiries faithfully if they shrank from contact with it. Was there anything the least answering to *this* habit of mind in our country? Is not the admitted prevalence of the greatest happiness doctrine one proof that we were moving in an opposite direction? Did not Coleridge's sympathy with German ontology spring from that unpractical side of his mind by which we have confessed that his countrymen were not attracted, but repelled? Let us consider.

Religious influences in England which worked in this direction.

22. That great Methodist movement to which we had occasion to refer in connection with the philosophical movements of the eighteenth century had not produced its full results till the nineteenth. Those results coincided in some remarkable points with those of the French revolution. They had something of the same democratic character; the Methodists went below the third estate; they spoke to the very lowest of the population. In some sense Methodism invested them with a greater power than that which the revolution bestowed upon those whom it lifted from the abyss. The influence of preachers and class leaders was of another kind from that which was possessed by the leading spirits in the club; it was not a less real or permanent influence. And the difference lay in this, that those preachers and class leaders spoke to the people of the Infinite and Eternal—declared that a voice had come forth from God to the people, that they might hear it. Supposing this movement had been confined to the poorest of society, it would still have been of the greatest significance. But it reached to the highest circles. A sense of their need of the Infinite and Eternal, of their having a relation to it, the same relation with that of the serf, was awakened in numbers of the upper classes. And this led to a strange discovery that the popular devotions of the English people—what are called its Common Prayers—had been speaking for centuries of infinite and eternal mysteries; had been denounced by the laymen and many of the clergymen of the Locke school, in the eighteenth century, on that very ground.

They affect the greatest

23. These movements and these discoveries might not have much interest for Mr. Bentham. But they affected, more than

happiness doctrine.

he knew, the cause for which he was pleading. A number of persons who had cared little for any interests but their own class or private interests, began to think of the greatest happiness of the greatest number; nay, to bestir themselves for the promotion of that happiness, sometimes in ways which he had suggested, sometimes in ways which he would have disapproved. Many who had an intense dislike to Methodism, the least possible sympathy with the old English devotions, yet spoke in their own way of an Eternal and Infinite Being, all good and benevolent, who was seeking the greatest happiness of His creatures. So that one branch of the nineteenth century philosophy grew and flourished, in spite of itself, under this protection. How was it with the other branch? Coleridge had participated as little as possible in the Methodist excitement. Though the son of a clergyman he had shaken off the habits of his childhood. He had attached himself to Priestley and the Unitarians. Their doctrine respecting a universal Father had a mighty attraction for him. He was ready to preach it in all the towns of England. If he felt himself repelled at times by their coldness, at times by their want of logic, his political anticipations were a refuge from the first; he could find in Hartley's beautiful harmonies a charm for his intellect as well as his affections. The road from Hartley's sympathetic wires to the all-embracing godhead of Spinoza was not a long one. How far more satisfying was that "divine drunkenness" than the dogmatism of men who spoke about an exclusive oneness, a negation of plurality! Then came the anguish of parting with those dreams which he had cherished, of a time when

Priestley.

Hartley.

Spinoza.

French Revolution.

> "Wisdom should teach her lore
> In the low huts of them who toil and groan;
> And, conquering by her happiness alone,
> France should compel the nations to be free,
> Till love and joy looked round and called the earth their own."

Kant.

Kant must have been indeed an ice-bucket to one who had just come out of this cauldron. All demonstrations of the being of God proved alike futile! The speculative reason always deceiving itself! A doubt whether there is any passage from ideas to reality! Coleridge has given in his *Literary Life* one hint respecting this crisis which is worth much more for his biography than most of its direct narratives. He learnt, he says, that if he could believe in God other difficulties would be nothing to him. That was the infinite difficulty. But he discovered that it was also the infinite necessity. He could believe nothing till he had this ground of belief. To feel this rock at his feet—to know

Personal humiliation

that it was a rock—he had need to be shown something also of what he himself was. There was awakened in him a

> "Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
> And genius given, and knowledge won in vain,
> And all which he had culled in wood-walks wild,
> And all which patient toil had reared, and all
> Commune with friends had opened out—but flowers,
> Strewed on his corse and borne upon his bier,
> In the same coffin, for the self-same grave."

Where Coleridge meets the inquiries of the post-Kantian Germans.

His theology

By such fearful experiences, combining with the studies of his previous life, Coleridge was brought to the conviction that the words which Englishmen had been wont to repeat, which he had been taught in his infancy, were not blasphemous, damnable words. There was a point at which the old faith of his land intersected the most modern philosophy of another land. The demand for Being by Plato, by Spinoza, by the Germans since Kant, was not an idle demand. *The I am that I am* who spoke to the Hebrew shepherd awakened it and answered it. The demand for Unity by philosophical or religious schools was not an idle demand. The name which was written upon the Christian child satisfied it. The belief in a Father, which Priestley and the Unitarians had inculcated, was a deep and true belief. But that it might be real and practical, that it might not mock men with the idlest hope, there must be a union between the Father and His children; there must be a redemption from evil. That redemption from evil fully justified all the protests of those who had most consciousness of evil, against a mere scheme of optimism. It could never justify them in making evil a ground or starting-point in their ethics. The emancipation and purification of the conscience must imply that there is a conscience to be emancipated and purified. The belief in a Spirit who awakens the human will or spirit must imply that there is a spirit or will to be awakened.

Ethics of Coleridge

Not always just to Utilitarians

24. "The greatest happiness of the greatest number" appeared to Coleridge to be one of those vague generalities which Bentham was in the habit of imputing to all thinkers who did not agree with him, and to many who did. Happiness, he said, must be either defined, or treated as the unknown quantity; if you begin to poll men, in order to know what they count happiness, you engage in a hopeless task; if you decide for them what is happiness, you introduce a tyrannical dogmatism; you are obliged to return to the old search for the duty of each person which you supposed that you were rid of. He did not perhaps see how much was implied in the very vagueness of this idea. Those who supposed that the reason of man was to discover what happiness was and that there was a happiness for all

human beings, might approach much nearer to his doctrine of a universal reason than they knew themselves. Those who had been baffled in their experiments to discover what was happiness in their own case, or to make other men understand what was happiness in theirs, might come nearer to the belief in a standard of good, even in a Being who sets forth that standard, and is that standard, than was at all indicated by the terms in which they expressed their theory. Theories are not very much to Englishmen: habits of mind are much more. There came, however, a time—the time which we indicated as having the like characteristics in France and Germany—when those who had been seeking and questioning began to systematize. The disciples of Bentham were not content any longer merely to announce a maxim and to denounce evils. They became fierce and dogmatic. All doctrines were scorned which could not be brought under their formula. The whole universe had been made, or must be made, according to that formula. If those who had profited by Coleridge's teaching had not been a much smaller and more insignificant body, there would have been the same danger of their becoming an arrogant and exclusive school. Coleridge himself was always promising a great work called *Logo-Sophia*, which might perhaps settle all questions, and be a complete organon of philosophy and theology. The habits of mind which he himself as well as those who admired or attacked him so much complained of, proved in this instance a blessing to himself and to his country. He was not able to produce the great book. What Hegel did in Germany and Cousin did in France was happily not to be done in England. There would have been a contradiction in it in Coleridge's case which there was not in either of the others. A system of ontology must be contained in a book; the Word of Wisdom is a living teacher speaking to men. A book which confused our apprehensions about that difference would have been merely mischievous. The real *Logo-Sophia* of Coleridge is contained in his *Lay Sermons*, which show that the wisdom of God, who through the prophets set forth moral and political principles to the Jews, is setting forth the same principles through them to Englishmen; in his *Aids to Reflection*, wherein he awakens young men to ask themselves whether that divine Wisdom is not speaking to *them*—whether the maxims of prudence and the messages to the conscience do not proceed from Him—whether there is not a will in them which can only be free when it is obeying the motions of a higher Will.

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Coleridge's *Logo-Sophia.*

His *Aids to Reflection.*

The third period (1830–1856).

25. The political movements in England which coincided with those in France after the revolution of 1830 had a vast influence upon the development of the doctrine which Bentham had

preached. Many of his disciples found themselves called from their studies to practical life—from protesting against abuses to experiments for removing them. Such times are trying to any opinion, as much from the suspicion and disappointments of those who hope, as from the opposition of those who fear, its success. Obstacles of experience that have not been foreseen are found to hinder the application of dogmas; official coldness succeeds to private fervour; the most enlightened and honest begin to perceive facts and even principles of which they have not taken account. On the whole, however, it cannot be doubted that the belief of utility as the sufficient maxim for states and individuals was the predominant one in those years. Some of its results, rather than any dislike to the theory, made the Conservative party in the land inquire whether there was not some opposing principle which might enable them to combat it. For a while the name of Coleridge acquired a certain respect and popularity. His maxims were patronized by distinguished men, even by the newspapers. It was thought that they might do service in some civil and ecclesiastical conflicts. This is not the kind of influence which would have justified Mr. Mill's language; this he must know is weak and precarious—worth nothing except as the outward sign of deeper convictions that were working in the heart of English society, and as a confession, like that which was made by the men who insulted Burke, till they became alarmed for their possessions, that no party can be merely an upholder of customs, privileges, traditions, that it must beg, borrow, or steal a principle somewhere. And soon it was discovered that Coleridge was not the writer from whom a principle could be most conveniently obtained for such purposes. Though an earnest defender, in spite of early prejudices, of the national ritual, and though more ready than most to accept it as a gift to the nation from the past, he did not regard it chiefly as a tradition—he did not submit to it mainly because authority was in its favour. The cry was raised at this time very loudly that authority and tradition—a human tradition and a human authority—are the only pillars upon which faith can rest. A philosophy like that of Le Maistre might be listened to, which canonized these; any other had an evil name affixed to it. Had not Coleridge spoken of the Reason as being the organ by which men apprehend the divinest truths? What was this but Rationalism in its most evil form? Whether the teachers who spoke thus proved specially consistent in their devotion to those national forms and that national faith which they affirmed that no one could care for who did not accept their formula and anathematize those whom they anathematized, this is not the place to inquire. At all events, we

New stage of Bentham.

Coleridge becoming useful to a party.

Mistake of the party.

The belief in authority and tradition.

Coleridge proves unsatisfactory.

may acknowledge that they were perfectly right in their conclusion that Coleridge could give them no help in maintaining their position—that no one had done more to prove it an unsafe and untenable one.

Demand for logic.

Mr. Mill's logic.

26. It is but doing these supporters of authority justice to affirm, that though they wisely rejected the aid which they had once sought from this quarter, they were willing to receive it from another which they had regarded with even more suspicion. The worship of authority could not be limited to ecclesiastical authority in its technical sense. The reverence for that had been accompanied in the Middle Ages with a longing for definite conclusions upon all subjects, especially with a belief in Logic as the chief of the sciences. That eminent man to whom we have several times alluded in this chapter met the demand for a book of authority upon this subject as no other member of any school could have met it. No one had profited so much as Mr. Mill by the lessons he had received among the professors of the utilitarian creed; no one had adhered more faithfully to the main articles of that creed; no one had done so much to expand them by hints and by a learning derived from those who held an entirely different creed. His book on logic embodies the results of this original education and this foreign study. Scarcely any book that has been produced in our day is equally complete and equally clear. It must be perfectly satisfactory to those who are content with the finite; it is tolerant and generous to those who are not. Of all the persons who hold decidedly and deliberately that there is no region accessible to men beyond that which he has expounded so admirably, Mr. Mill is perhaps the only one who sees the possibility of that which he does not recognize, the only one who would not endeavour by weapons of scorn and by weapons less strictly intellectual, if they were within reach, to extinguish any other belief.

Sir W. Hamilton on Cousin.

War with the unconditional.

27. Before Mr. Mill's Logic was published—in its first form so early as the year 1829—a Scotch philosopher produced a review of *Cousin's Cours de Philosophie,* which bore directly upon this question, and has powerfully affected the thought of Great Britain in these later years. Sir William Hamilton was entirely unlike Dugald Stewart. He was interested in all passing topics. He had no wish to separate philosophy from human interests. He had a knowledge of its past movements to which neither his predecessors nor any of his contemporaries could pretend. He gave the strict force to the name. It was for him a search, whatever might or might not be found. With great respect for the learning and the eloquence of *Cousin,* he pronounced that the ontological system which the Frenchman had hoped for could not be found. He asserted the great value of Kant's investi-

gations into the conditions of the understanding. He eagerly claimed Kant's testimony against incursions into the region of the unconditioned, bitterly lamenting that the German had himself opened the door to the investigations which he deprecated by the language he had used respecting the practical reason. He denounced Schelling, Hegel, all the post-Kantian pursuers of the Absolute. He treated with contempt Coleridge's applications of the distinction between the Understanding and the Reason. *Nescience* he recommended, after the example of all the wisest thinkers, as the ultimate end as well as the starting-point of philosophy. The philosopher has a legitimate sphere in examining what are the limits of the human intellect. The Infinite is that which prohibits all his advances.

The two kinds of ignorance

Socrates.

Cusa.

Jacobi.

28. Such words seem to us capable of the best and of the worst sense. There is an ignorance which, as Sir William Hamilton says, the truest philosophers have confessed, and which was the root of their wisdom. It is the ignorance which Socrates opposed to the dogmatism of the Sophists—the ignorance which Nicolans von Cusa opposed to the dogmatism of the schoolmen—the ignorance which Jacobi opposed to the dogmatism of the eighteenth century. There is an ignorance which has been attributed to men by the very persons whom these brave teachers struggled with. Anytus attributed it to his countrymen, and therefore accused Socrates of bringing in new gods and corrupting the minds of the youth, because he said that there was a divine teacher, because he told young men they could pursue the right and avoid the wrong, because he said that gods who did wrong and encouraged wrong could not be true gods. The proud Aristotelians in the Middle Ages attributed this ignorance to Christian people, and therefore said that they could know nothing of God but what they learnt from an infallible authority, and that they must be punished if they did not stoop to that. Hume and Voltaire attributed that ignorance to all men, and therefore treated with the bitterest contempt the philosophers of the Old World, who sought the Infinite and the Eternal, the preachers of the Gospel in the New World, who said that the Infinite and Eternal had been revealed to men.

The Positivists.

29. We are far from imputing to Sir William Hamilton agreement with the last of these classes; we believe that in his inmost heart he was in unison with the former. But we are obliged by many movements in British society, which have happened since he wrote his Essay, carefully to consider with which we agree, from which we dissent. We cannot merely proclaim that the sun has gone back ten degrees on the dial; that philosophy is just where it was in the middle of the eighteenth century; that all the experiments of the time since the French revolution have been

The Secularists.

mere failures. These experiments, or at least the events that made them necessary, have had *this* indisputable result. They have brought the schools and the world into the closest proximity. They have made it impossible that one language should be maintained as true for students and an opposite language as true for the people. If the Absolute and Eternal must be banished from the thoughts of philosophers, because there is no human organ wherewith to take account of them, they must be banished from the thoughts of men. There is a growing feeling among the rich and prosperous that the invisible world has no interest for men in a refined state of civilization. The opinion which Comte has formulized is stated popularly in English books which have obtained the widest circulation and reputation. All ideas of moral government and spiritual influence, they say, belong to an older time; we have left them far behind us. A doctrine which naturally commends itself to those who find the visible world comfortable and satisfactory has descended upon those who find it uncomfortable and unsatisfactory. Under the name of Secularism it is spreading rapidly among some of the most intelligent of the class which comprises the bulk of our population. The world is not specially their friend, nor the world's law; but they look upon all tidings respecting the unseen as only fictions that are invented to keep them on their present level. Many of their teachers have been religious teachers in their day. They proclaim that the terrors and hopes of the future which they once entertained have become nothing to them; that only the present can be understood or is worthy to be thought of. To tell such men that as philosophers you perfectly agree with them; that you, as much as they, scorn those in former days who tried to look beyond the bounds of the finite; but that for the good order of society, and for the sake of avoiding possible perils hereafter, certain forms of expression must be kept up which seem to imply that the infinite can be brought within the range of our cognizance, nay, that it should be the main object of our study and pursuit; to do this is simply to provoke their righteous scorn and indignation. We draw upon ourselves the charge that we attach no meaning to the words which we count most sacred. We urge on a revolution more terrible than any we have witnessed yet; one in which the mass of the people shall treat these words, and all the associations that belong to them . . . as we have treated them

One message to them.

The other message.

30. Will it be altogether the same if we can tell our countrymen, appealing to history for the confirmation of our words, that not in another day, but in our own day—not in times before the French revolution broke down the barriers between classes, but

specially since that event, and in consequence of that event—men without the least theological bias, as jealous of theologians as any Secularist can be—just because they longed for freedom, just because they had a vehement passion for truth—broke through the lore of the eighteenth century, which told them that they must limit themselves to outward and visible things, that they could have no apprehension of the Infinite and Eternal? Will it be the same if we can show them by the same evidence of history, that all civilization which has lost sight of this eternal ground has of necessity become a crushing civilization; fatal to human energies and to the poor man; never able to sustain itself without the aid of an artificial religion—a religion of mere fear; at last doomed to destruction by some vigorous race believing in that which is not material, confessing a God? Will it be the same if we testify to them that the Absolute, however small may be its worth as a mere metaphysical notion, must come in contact with them as a living power; that beneath them lies either an abyss of arbitrary self-will—that divinity which Hobbes worshipped, and yet which he could not worship in all its blackness, because he had the dream of certain maxims of reason which qualified it, and yet which it alone creates and interprets—or else an absolutely righteous power, a Being who is light, and in whom is no darkness? Will it be the same if we show them that they cannot get rid of the belief in incarnations; that in fact their tendency is to believe in nothing else; that all visible tyrannies must be incarnations and embodiments of that principle of self-will, if there is not some other mightier principle which fights against it and is destined to destroy it? Will it be the same if we tell them that *the* incarnation of which we speak means that of the perfectly righteous Being, who, as we hold, humbled Himself to the state of the poor man, and entered into all the conflicts, visible and invisible, to which man is subject, that He might set him free from them; that He might establish the dominion before which all tyrannies, ecclesiastical, democratical, imperial, all the powers of death, are at last to fall down?

Civilization grounded upon the Eternal, and severed from it.

31. Nor dare we forget that England rules over millions of human beings who, in their faiths and their philosophies, have been feeling after the Infinite and the Eternal if haply they might find it; who have confessed incarnations of evil powers and of good—of destroyers and deliverers. We may use our western civilization to tell these millions that their efforts have all been futile and ridiculous. We may use our western religion to tell them that the good that is in them did not proceed from the Source of Good; that they have no divine Teacher with them who can separate the good from the evil, who can bring them from darkness into perfect light. Or we

England and its subjects.

may believe that we exist as a nation to bear exactly the opposite witness to this; that every English statesman, soldier, man of science, just so far as he testifies of right, order, truth, in the government of men or in the operations of nature, is helping to distinguish between that which is of God and that which is of the evil spirit; that every missionary, so far as he proclaims a perfectly righteous Being, a Son of God who came to deliver men from moral and physical evil, and a Spirit of God who is the spring of all that is right in the heart and reason of man, who is struggling with all that is foul and corrupt—must be meeting the desires, hopes, intuitions, that are expressed in their mythologies and philosophies—must be working for the division of these from the horrible slavery to the outward and present world, from the horrible anticipations of the unseen and future world, with which they have been polluted.

Old Mythologies.

Conclusion.

32. It is not for us to prophesy whether England will understand her function or not; whether she will use the blessings which have been given her for the interpretation of the past, as well as of the present, for uniting the nations of Christendom, for teaching and binding together all the nations of the earth. If she and all the nations which have hitherto confessed the faith of Christ become ministers of darkness, enemies of the Light, the Light will not the less make itself manifest. Other instruments will be found to diffuse it. Known in all lands, mixing with all people, seen in every temple of Mammon, bearing silent witness in every such temple of a Righteous God, the Jew of our century may come to discover that he was sent into the world to be a blessing, not a curse, to all the families of the earth. Uniting all that was truly divine in Spinoza, all that was truly rational in Moses Mendelssohn, to a thorough faith in the promises made to his fathers, to a deep sense of the need of a Redemption from evil, he may speak to men as we have never spoken, of a humbled and glorified Son of man—of a Son of God who perfectly reveals the Infinite and the Eternal. The nation which was chosen as the first guide to men in the search after moral and metaphysical wisdom may be also the last.

The Jew.

The witness for the Eternal to man.

INDEX.

Aaron sets up an Egyptian idol, i. 27.
Abammon (see *Iamblichus*).
Abbassides, a Mahometan sect, i. 459.
Abelard, accounts of his life by modern writers, i. 538.
  his autobiography, i. 539-543.
  his contest with William of Champeaux, i. 539-540.
  his relation with Anselm of Laon, i. 541-542.
  his relation with Heloisa, i. 542-543.
  accused as a traitor, i. 545.
  dedicates an oratory to the Paraclete, i. 545.
  correspondence with Heloisa, i. 547, 548.
  his relations with Peter of Clugni, i. 548-550.
  light thrown on him by M. Cousin, i. 551.
  difference between him and Roscellinus, i. 551-552.
  Fragment on Genera and Species, i. 555-560.
  the "*Sic et non,*" i. 560-565.
Abraham, his education, i. 7.
  a prophet, i. 26.
Academy (see *Plato*, *Plotinus*, *Lorenzo de Medici*).
Adam, ideas of South and Milton concerning (see *South* and *Milton*).
  of Clarendon concerning, ii. 340.
Adam Smith (see *Smith*, Adam).
Adeodatus, son of Augustine, i. 374.
Addison represents the union of letters and fashionable life, ii. 527.
Æacus, alluded to by Socrates, i. 131.
Æneas Sylvius contrasted with Nicolas of Cusa, ii. 51.
Æschylus, his effect on his contemporaries, i. 115.
Agni, how related to Brahm, i. 38.
Agricola, his influence in England, i. 456.
Agrippa (Cornelius), his early life, ii. 125.
  a court favourite, ii. 126.
Agriopa (Cornelius), his place in the sixteenth century, ii. 126.
  his book on the sciences, ii. 127-128.
  difference between him and Paracelsus, ii. 129.
Agrippina (see *Seneca*).
Ahriman, the object of Magian worship, i. 75.
  visible world given up to him by later Persian philosophy, i. 77.
Albertus Magnus, his relation to Aristotle, i. 595.
  Ritter's opinion of him, i. 596.
  has suffered from his admirers, i. 596.
  his birth and early training, i. 596.
  his opinion of Aquinas, i. 597.
  career after going to Paris, i. 597.
  his habits and work, i. 598-599.
  relations of his doctrines to those of Aristotle, i. 599-600.
  distinction between him and Aquinas, i. 606.
Alcibiades, the type of Athenian character, i. 128.
  the effect on Athens of his career, i. 129.
  the dialogue of Plato on (see *Plato*, *Proclus*).
Alcuin of York, author disinclined to praise him, i. 460.
  his character and circumstances, i. 460.
  his relations to Charlemagne, i. 460.
  his idea of education, i. 460.
  greater as a schoolmaster than as a theologian, i. 461.
Alexander of Macedon, Aristotle's influence on him, i. 178.
  enables Aristotle to collect materials for his book, i. 178.
  the age of, i. 233.
Alexander of Hales precedes Bonaventura, i. 635.
Alexander Severus, his dream of eclectic unity, i. 300.
Alexander the Platonist, his instruction of Marcus Aurelius, i. 294.

Alexander Aphrodisius, the leader of a Peripatetic sect, ii. 61.
Alexander Borgia, his attitude towards Savonarola, ii. 91-92.
Alexandria, worthy to bear the name of Alexander, i. 254, 255.
  influence on Indians, Persians, and Jews, i. 255.
  teachers of, unable to interpret the faith of East or West, i. 255.
  their influence on the Romans, i. 255.
  school of, how like the Pharisees and the Sadducees, i. 277.
  contrast between Alexandria and Carthage, i. 304.
  church of, its character, i. 306, 307.
  teachers of (see *Clemens*, *Pantænus*, *Plotinus*).
  the focus of philosophical thought in fourth century, i. 378. (See *Hypatia*, *Athanasius*.)
Alfred, his view of Boethius, i. 439.
Alpakhar criticised by Spinoza, ii. 407.
Alphege (see *Anselm*).
Ammonius Saccas, absence of writings of, i. 316.
  probable relation to the Christians, i. 316-317.
  influence over Plotinus, i. 317.
Amyntas II. (see *Aristotle*.)
Anabaptists, how they might quote Sir Thomas More, ii. 100.
  their insurrections, ii. 120, 121.
  how used by Paracelsus, ii. 130.
Analysis (see *Scotus*, Johannes).
  "Victorious" in the end of eighteenth century, ii. 528.
Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ, his love of astronomy, i. 100, 101.
  relations to Pericles, i. 101, 102.
  doctrine, attractions of, for Pericles, i. 101.
  charges against him, i. 102.
  difficulty of sympathising with him, i. 102.
  opinions of, as quoted by Bruno, ii. 176.
  opinion of Socrates of him, as quoted by Bruno, ii. 180.
  sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
Anaximander, a geographer, i. 94.
  by vocation a wisdom-hunter, i. 94.
  his relation to Thales, i. 94.
  his belief in the Infinite, i. 94.
  his relations with Pythagoras, i. 103.
Anaximenes, Plutarch's view of him, i. 95.
  his ideas about ἀρχὴ, i. 95.
André, letters of, ii. 484-486.
Anebon (see *Porphyry*).
Anicetus, plot of, Seneca's complicity in, i. 271 (note).
Anniceris takes off the edges of the doctrines of Aristippus, i. 136, 137.
Anquetil, compiler of the Zendavesta, i. 74.
Anselm of Aoste, a great contrast to Lanfranc, i. 514.
  the philosopher of the eleventh century, i. 514.
  connection between Anselm the philosopher and Anselm the "rebellious churchman," i. 515.
  his life before and in the convent of Bec, i. 515.
  several theological works written in the convent, i. 516.
  his conversation with Lanfranc about Alphege, i. 516.
  superiority of Anselm to Lanfranc in knowledge of England, i. 517.
  his reluctance to come to Canterbury, i. 517.
  connection of Anselm's philosophy with his politics, i. 518.
  few of Anselm's works controversial, i. 519.
  his love of righteousness, i. 519.
  the "*Cur Deus Homo*," i. 519, 520.
  a moralist, i. 520.
  difference of, from Johannes Scotus, i. 520.
  his "*Monologue*," i. 520-523.
  the "*Proslogion*," i. 523-528.
  dialogue, "*De Veritate*," i. 528-531.
  dialogue, "*De Voluntate*," i. 531.
  dialogue, "*De Libero Arbitrio*," i. 531.
  dialogue, "*De Concordiâ Præscientiæ Dei cum libero arbitrio*," i. 532.
  dialogue, "*De Grammatico*," i. 532. (See *Roscellinus*.)
  an opponent of trivialities, i. 533.
  objects of his work, i. 536.
Anselm of Laon (see *Abelard*).
Antioch (see *Ignatius*, *Saturninus*).
Antisthenes contrasted with Diogenes, i. 137.
  Plato's acquaintance with, i. 140.
  contrasted with Socrates, i. 140.
Anytus, his special grudges against Socrates, i. 130.

Anytus, his belief in the ignorance of his countrymen, ii. 673.
Aphrodite weak without counsel, i. 83.
Apollo, deviser of counsels, i. 83.
  giver of life, i. 86.
  oracle about Plotinus, i. 318.
Apollonius of Tyana, dimness of traditions about him, i. 275.
  his admiration for Pythagoras, i. 275.
  opposition to priests, i. 275.
  sense of inspiration, i. 275.
  practises enchantments, i. 276.
Apollos supposed to be a sophist in rivalry with St. Paul, i. 260.
Aquinas (Thomas), opinion expressed about him by Albertus Magnus, i. 597.
  friendship between him and Albertus, i. 597.
  second sight of Albertus about Aquinas' death, i. 597.
  differences of Albertus and Aquinas, i. 606.
  Aquinas fulfils Albertus's prophecy, i. 606.
  his life by Echard, i. 607.
  state of University of Paris when he was there, i. 607, 608.
  received into it as representative of Dominican Order, i. 609.
  writings at Paris and at Rome, i. 609.
  the "*Summa Theologiæ*," i. 609-610.
  character of his disputes and doubts, i. 610.
  effect on his readers, i. 611.
  his characteristics, i. 611-612.
  his proof of the impossibility of some acts to God, i. 612.
  arguments on the opposite side, i. 612-613.
  his solution of the difficulty, i. 613-615.
  opinions about his writings, i. 615.
  possible future work for him, i. 616.
  the "*Summa, Pars Prima*," i. 616-620.
  the "*Prima Secundæ*," i. 620-625.
  brings in Aristotelian doctrine of the mean, i. 625.
  inconsistencies, i. 626.
  on Law, i. 626-628.
  on Faith, i. 628-630.
  Prudence, i. 630-632.
  Justice, i. 632-633.
  Religion, piety, and reverence, i. 633.
  other virtues, i. 634.
  appears in Dante's "*Paradiso*," i. 674.
Aquinas, how his followers carried out his ideas, ii. 5.
  appealed to by Gerson, ii. 45.
  reverenced by Pico di Mirandula, ii. 83.
  his method contrasted with that of Descartes, ii. 318.
Arabia (see *Mahomet*, *Mahometans*, *Averroes*, *Avicenna*, *Aristotle*).
Aratus quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, i. 308.
Arcadius, fifth century opens with reign of, i. 377.
Ares, weak when without counsel, i. 83.
Argyrophilus, his opinion of Reuchlin, ii. 103.
Aristides contrasted with Roman heroes, i. 223.
Aristippus of Cyrene, his temperament, i. 135.
  his application of the doctrines of Socrates, i. 136.
  differences between him and Socrates (how he explained), i. 136.
  Plato's acquaintance with, i. 140.
  contrasted with Socrates, i. 140.
Archytas, a later Pythagorean, i. 108.
Aristomenes (see *Julian*).
Ariston, an Argive wrestler, Plato studies under, i. 139.
Ariston, the Stoic, scorns dialectics, i. 241.
Aristophanes, the standard he recognized for Athenian morality, i. 117.
  effect on Athenians, i. 121, 122.
  how different from Socrates, i. 122.
  meaning of the "Clouds," i. 133.
  how far he understood Socrates, i. 133, 134.
Aristotle, his appeals to common experience, Preface, i. xix.
  his opinion of Thales, i. 90-93.
    of Empedocles, i. 100.
  his criticism on Anaxagoras, i. 101.
  his reverence for Pythagoras, i. 108.
  his use of the word Sophist, i. 116.
  importance of his works and those of Plato, i. 159.
  his influence on later times, i. 177.
  birth and education at court of Amyntas, i. 177.
  his later life, i. 178.
  difference from Plato, i. 179, 180.
  his feelings towards Socrates and Plato, i. 181, 182.

Aristotle, relations of his philosophy to that of Plato, i. 182-185.
  Logic, i. 186.
  "Categories," i. 186-188.
  Later Analytics, i. 189.
  Mathematics, i. 189.
  his induction, i. 191.
  the "Topics," i. 191-192.
  the Physics, i. 192-197.
  the Metaphysics, i. 197-218.
  Psychology, i. 218-220.
  Ethics, i. 221-230.
  "Politics," i. 230-231.
  Rhetoric, i. 232.
  representative of Alexandrian period, i. 233.
  his relation to Epicurus, i. 236, 237.
  to the Stoics, i. 241.
  his influence on Cicero, i. 253.
  Philo's ignorance of him, i. 258.
  likeness of his philosophy to the Persian philosophy, i. 264.
  Seneca offended by his view of anger, i. 267.
  his want of understanding of Socrates, i. 283.
  why quoted by Proclus, i. 380.
  an Aristotelian epoch towards close of fifth century, i. 400.
  influence on Boethius, i. 401, 426-427.
  what he did not mean by science, i. 426.
  influence on Porphyry, i. 434, 435.
  writing about him by Boethius, i. 436.
  compared with Boethius, i. 448.
  acquaintance of Johannes Scotus with, i. 468.
  re-arrangement of, by Johannes Scotus, i. 480.
  influence on Anselm, i. 522.
  misunderstood by Abelard, i. 563, 565.
  influence on Mohametans, i. 592, 593.
  difference between Popes and Mendicant Friars about him, i. 593, 594. (See *Albertus* Magnus, *Aquinas*, *Boethius*, *Kant*, *Duns* Scotus).
  acquaintance of Eckart with him, ii. 19.
  Cusa's feelings towards him, ii. 51, 59.
  Arabian revolt from him, ii. 62.
  struggle with Plato, ii. 63, 64, 67.
Aristotle, feeling of Pico towards him, ii. 81.
  his confession of a divine ruler, ii. 82.
  Erasmus' feeling towards, ii. 102.
  feeling of Reuchlin towards, ii. 108.
  attacked by Luther, ii. 112-115.
  opinion of Ramus of him, ii. 141-145-149.
  difference of, from Bellarmin, ii. 154-156.
  Bruno's attitude towards, ii. 164-166.
  Bacon's counterweight to the doctrines of, ii. 199, 215.
  studied by Hobbes, ii. 236.
  opposed by Hobbes, ii. 253.
  contrasted by Descartes with his followers, ii. 308.
  Descartes contrasts his own process with that of, ii. 318.
  South's allusions to, ii. 343.
  not admired by Henry More, ii. 348.
  difference of, from Plato, ii. 435.
  Locke contrasted with, ii. 448.
  sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
  reconciled with Descartes, ii. 505.
  Condillac's idea of, ii. 536.
Arius, his language not very intelligible to Constantine, i. 346.
  his controversy with Athanasius, i. 346-347.
Arians, defeat of, in Africa, i. 404.
  hostile to philosophy, i. 415.
Arianism troublesome to Justinian, i. 406.
  empire of, destroyed by Catholic Church, i. 410.
  of Theodoric not the cause of death of Boethius, i. 437 (see also *Milton*).
Arjoon (see *Bhagavad-gita*).
Arminianism, its political effect; ii. 208-209.
  its struggle with Calvinism, ii. 339.
Arnauld (Antoine), the representative of the Port-Royal Society, ii. 366.
  relations with Malebranche, ii. 367.
  importance of this contest, ii. 368-370.
Arnold of Brescia, a pupil of Abelard, i. 570.
  his offer of alliance to Barbarossa, i. 571.
  showed how culture might affect ecclesiastical government, i. 593.
Arrian, his reports of Epictetus, i. 274.
Asclepius (Scholia of), i. 197 (note).

- *Asia*, difference of philosophy in, from European philosophy, i. 53.
  - opposition between, and Greece, i. 82.
  - rulers of, from whom they believed their oracles derived, i. 85.
  - reformed under influence of Christianity while Europe under influence of Islamism, ii. 1.
- *Artemis* holds the sun and moon in fee, i. 86.
- *Asat*, deeds performed without faith, i. 47.
- *Assyrians*, their dogmas, quoted by Iamblichus, i. 333.
- *Assyrian* art, i. 36.
  - politics, i. 36.
- *Astrolabius*, son of Abelard, i. 543.
- *Astrology* in Chaldea, i. 35.
  - Magian, i. 76.
  - meaning of, i. 121.
  - of the Orientals, i. 591.
  - relation of, to the Alexandrian philosophy, i. 329 (see also *Agripva*, Cornelius).
  - in time of Paracelsus, ii. 131.
- *Athanasius*, his oration against the Gentiles, i. 348-351.
  - influence of Alexandrian thought on him, i. 351.
  - feels no attraction to heathen teachers, i. 532.
  - his life a struggle against idolatry, i. 352.
  - his opposition to Julian, i. 357.
  - helped by Plato, i. 398.
  - difference between him and Justinian, i. 405, 406.
  - likeness to Augustine, i. 471.
  - dwells on the unreasonableness of his opponents, ii. 512.
- *Athenagoras*, a philosopher like Justin, i. 472.
- *Athene* the counsellor, i. 83.
- *Athens*, its effect on Anaxagoras, i. 101.
  - the capital of Greece in an intellectual sense, i. 114.
  - age of Pericles, its glorious time, i. 114 (see *Pericles*).
  - the tragedians exhibit the mind of, i. 115.
  - effect of Sophists on, i. 116 (see *Grote*, *Sophists*).
  - service of the Athenian democracy to the world, i. 117-118.
  - temptations of, i. 118.
  - how its citizens were taught to think, i. 119.
- *Athens*, personal grace and beauty highly thought of at, i. 125.
  - how affected by Alcibiades, i. 129.
  - tolerant of opinions, i. 130.
  - delicacy of Athenian taste, i. 132.
  - affects to consider Macedonia barbarous in the fourth century, i. 177.
  - some prizes as precious at Rome as at Athens, i. 246.
  - Seneca's opinion of, i. 270.
  - Neo-Platonism flourishes in, in fifth century, i. 378.
  - its position in the sixth century, i. 382.
- *Atlantis* (see *Plato*), Anselm's ideas about, i. 525-526.
- *Augustin* of Canterbury, result of his mission to England, i. 416.
- *Augustin* of Hippo, one of three philosophers of the fourth century, i. 348.
  - as a theologian he belongs rather to the fifth century, i. 348.
  - his life demonstrates weakness of Julian's position, i. 358.
  - his life from within, i. 358.
  - "The Confessions," the key to his philosophy, i. 359.
  - effect on him of Cicero's "*Hortensius,*" i. 359.
  - passage from the fourth book of his "Confessions," i. 360-371.
  - work "Against the Academics," i. 372, 373.
  - unlikeness to Tertullian, i. 373.
  - book "*De Beata Vitâ,*" i. 373, 374.
  - the books "*De Ordine,*" i. 374, 375.
  - books of Soliloquies, i. 375, 376.
  - the books on Music, i. 376.
  - his work in the sixth century, i. 378.
  - effect of, on the students of Proclus, i. 388.
  - helped by Plato as his successors could not be, i. 398.
  - though a Latin, emphatically *the* Platonist, i. 401.
  - the only eminent Latin teacher in the first six centuries, i. 423.
  - difference of his effect on Luther and on the dogmatists of the ninth century, i. 463.
  - driven by philosophy into theology, i. 471.
  - effect of the sense of evil on him, i. 475.
  - what Johannes Scotus learnt from him, i. 480.

Augustin of Hippo, Platonism of, i. 490.
  quoted by Johannes Scotus, i. 493, 496.
  compared with Anselm, i. 523.
  quoted by Abelard, i. 544.
    by Peter Lombard, i. 573.
  influences the whole mind of the Middle Ages, i. 574-576.
  admired by John of Salisbury, i. 580.
  why Aquinas rejected his philosophy, i. 619.
    and his grammar, i. 622.
  Aquinas argues against and quotes him in the "*Secunda Secundæ*," i. 629.
  Bonaventura approves him in part, i. 639.
  what he has to tell us, i. 640.
  quoted by Bonaventura, i. 643.
  contrasted with Gerson, ii. 45.
  Luther's relations to, ii. 111, 115.
  his theology accepted by Clement VIII., ii. 186.
  relations to the French, ii. 346.
  his relation to Cicero compared with the relation of Malebranche to Descartes, ii. 352.
  his effect on Jansenius, ii. 365.
  Spinoza's use of his language, ii. 388.
  compared with Athanasius, ii. 436.
  cause of Luther's attraction to, ii. 436.
  form of his doctrine in Jonathan Edwards, ii. 471-472.
  dwells on the unreasonableness of his opponents, ii. 512.
  contrasted with Rousseau, ii. 549, 550.
Augustus contrasted with Nero by Seneca, i. 271.
Aurelius (Marcus) opens a new age of history, i. 294.
  likeness to Epictetus and unlikeness to Seneca, i. 294.
  his benefactors, i. 294.
  his "Meditations," i. 294-298.
  relation to Christian Church, i. 298, 299 (see *Julian*).
Aurelius, a pupil of Plotinus, i. 317.
Austin vindicates the constitution, though a follower of Bentham, ii. 606.
Averroes, a strict observer of the law, i. 593.
  comments on Aristotle, i. 593.
  Albertus Magnus appeals to, i. 599.
  but writes a book against him, i. 602.
Averroes, followers of, attacked by Lully, i. 669-670.
  doctrines of, suspected by Lully as influencing Christians, ii. 2.
  described as a leader of the Peripatetics by Ficinus, ii. 61.
Avicenna, an Arabian teacher, very profligate, i. 593.
  quoted by Duns Scotus, i. 649.
Avignon, effect of removal of Papal See to, ii. 2.

Babel, polity characteristic of Assyria, i. 36.
Bacon (Roger), his fame as a magician, i. 655.
  his birth and education, i. 656.
  likeness to the friar in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 656-657.
  his expenditure and its results, i. 657.
  suspected of heresy, i. 658.
  supports Grosseteste, i. 659.
  imprisoned as a heretic, i. 659.
  befriended by Clement IV., i. 660.
  dies, i. 660.
  his fame in Elizabeth's reign, i. 660, 661.
  how like Raymond Lully, i. 661.
  what he had learnt from St. Francis, ii. 5.
  likeness to Paracelsus, ii. 129.
Bacon (Francis), his criticism on Plato, i. 175, 176.
  his confusion between different classes of phenomena, i. 196.
  theory about the books that have survived, i. 352.
  his relation to the reign of James I., ii. 198.
  his early training, ii. 199, 200.
  his feelings at Cambridge, ii. 200; 201.
  his travels, ii. 201.
  science forced on him, ii. 201.
  reasons of his preference of physical studies to others, ii. 202.
  difference from his contemporaries, ii. 202, 203.
  his relations to Essex, ii. 203.
  his prayer in the "*Instauratio Magna*," ii. 204.
  likeness to and difference from Galileo, ii. 212.
  fitness of his education for his work, ii. 213.
  his relations to Plato and Socrates, ii. 214, 215.

Bacon (Francis), his relation to Aristotle, ii. 215.
to the king, ii. 216.
"The Advancement of Learning," ii. 217-232.
his theology, ii. 223-224.
"*De Augmentis Scientiarum*," ii. 232.
his grandeur, ii. 232.
his fall and its lessons, ii. 233.
opinions of Ritter and English critics of him, ii. 233, 234.
Christian paradoxes, ii. 234.
his friends, ii. 235.
his face, ii. 235.
likeness to Hobbes, ii. 243.
difference from Kant (see *Kant*).
his importance, ii. 291.
older than Descartes, ii. 291.
Descartes compared with, ii. 312.
Locke's attitude towards, ii. 437.
his protest against introspection, ii. 439.
(see *Aristotle*), the result of his method, ii. 438, 439.
his rejection of the beliefs of Copernicus and Bruno, ii. 440.
Vico's reverence for, ii. 504.
the result of his teaching, ii. 524.
his effect on Locke, ii. 525.
his Organon contrasted with Kant's, ii. 631.
contrasted with Spenser, Shakspeare, and Hooker (see *Shakspeare*, *Spenser*, and *Hooker*).
Basilides a Gnostic, i. 290.
Baronius, his ecclesiastical history, i. 279.
Barcochba causes separation between Church and Synagogue, i. 291.
Bartholomèss, life of Bruno, ii. 184 (note), 185.
Basil exhibits principle of Church as foundation of life, i. 408.
Basle, Council of (see *Nicolaus von Cusa*).
Bayle, Peter, ii. 511, 486, 487 (see *Leibnitz*).
Becket feels weakness of Italy, i. 571.
his contest with Henry, i. 578.
Beghards, Eckart's alliance with, ii. 21.
Papal Bull against, ii. 25.
Belisarius, effect of his victories, i. 404, 410.
Bellarmin compared to Mariana, ii. 153, 154.
his treatise, ii. 155-157.
puts Bruno to death, ii. 186-187.
Bentham, his standard of worth, Preface, xix.
his education, ii. 602.
his preface to the "Fragment on Government," ii. 602, 603.
why disliked, ii. 604.
his services, ii. 604, 605.
likeness to Paley, ii. 605.
his school, ii. 605.
his bitterness, ii. 606.
his doctrine about the invisible world ii. 654.
likeness to Coleridge in the contempt felt for him in his own day and his subsequent influence, ii. 664-665.
his power, ii. 665.
contrasted with his disciples, ii. 670.
Bentley defends the faith from Newton's starting point, ii. 455.
a founder of a school of criticism, ii. 479.
his importance, ii. 479.
contrasted with Paley, ii. 598.
Berengarius, common notions about him, i. 511.
his disputes, i. 511.
feelings of Hildebrand and Lanfranc towards him, i. 512.
his controversy with Lanfranc, ii. 512-514.
Berkeley contrasted with Plato, i. 142, 143.
his visit to Malebranche, ii. 361.
visits the circle in which Pope lives, ii. 453.
likeness to Pope and Bolingbroke, ii. 456.
the "Minute Philosopher," ii. 456.
his aims, ii. 456.
his idealism, ii. 457, 458.
relation to Malebranche, ii. 458, 459.
contrasted with Kant (see *Kant*).
compared with Butler, ii. 459.
his view of materialists, ii. 494, 532.
contrasted with Reid, ii. 584.
his mistake, ii. 625.
criticised by Kant, ii. 635.
Bernard of Clairvaux, his influence in Europe, i. 535.
his business qualities, i. 536.
why he attacked Abelard, i. 545-547.
Peter of Clugni's feeling towards him, i. 549.
failure of his crusade, i. 571.
a saint, not a doctor, i. 571-572.
sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.

Beza receives Ramus coldly, ii. 144.
his obedience to Calvin, ii. 144.
coldness to Bruno, ii. 166.
Bhagavad-gita, completeness of, i. 40.
account of it, i. 41-48.
occasion of, i. 48.
moral, i. 48.
cause of difficulties of Arjoon in, i. 49.
relation to pure Brahminism and to the Veds, i. 49.
Kreeshna's relation in it to Brahm, i. 49.
ultimate object of it, i. 50.
Bias, one of the seven wise men, i. 87.
his advice to the Ionian cities, i. 89.
Blackstone, his effect on Bentham, ii. 602, 603.
attacked by Bentham, ii. 603.
Blakesley, his life of Aristotle, i. 183 (note).
Boehme, Jacob, contrast with Grotius, ii. 325.
his claims to notice, ii. 325.
his influence over William Law, ii. 325-327.
his life and works, ii. 327-329.
Dr. Meisner's sentence on him, ii. 329.
his physics, theology, and morals, ii. 329, 330.
effect on him of the thirty years' war, ii. 330.
the moral of his life, ii. 331.
Böhringer of Zurich, his work on the German mystics, ii. 26.
his opinion on the question of identity between Nicolas of Basle and Tauler's "Layman," ii. 26, 27 (note).
his opinion of Savonarola, ii. 83-84.
Boethius (*Anicius*, *Manlius*, *Severinus*), place in a history of philosophy, i. 400, 401.
his birth and early training and character, i. 423-425.
how unlike Lucretius and Seneca, i. 425.
why out of sympathy with Plato, i. 425.
his idea of arithmetic and geometry, i. 426.
"*Liber de Unitate et Uno*," i. 426-428.
book on arithmetic, i. 428, 429.
feelings about logic, i. 430.
books on geometry, i. 430, 431.
logical treatises, i. 431-434.
Boethius, his opinion of Porphyry's work, i. 432, 434.
difference between him and Porphyry, i. 435.
his commentary on Porphyry, i. 435, 436.
books on categories of Aristotle, i. 436.
on rhetoric, i. 436.
supposed treatises, i. 436, 437.
relations of his philosophy to Christianity, i. 437, 438.
book "*De Consolatione Philosophiæ*," i. 438-447.
relations to Platonism and Aristotelianism, i. 447, 448.
why he has been thought a Christian, i. 449, 450.
how the actual order of human training differed from that which he believed necessary, i. 451.
re-appearance of his scheme of study in Britain, i. 456.
commentaries on him discovered by Cousin, i. 551.
proved by Cousin to have sown the seed of the quarrel between Nominalists and Realists, i. 553.
quoted by Abelard, i. 553.
Aristotle known to Abelard through Boethius and Porphyry's translations, i. 563.
quoted by Hugo de St. Victoire, i. 570.
effect of his translations and those of Porphyry on John of Salisbury, i. 580.
likeness and unlikeness to Raymond Lully, i. 673.
Bolingbroke, his contempt for priests, ii. 451.
for the Puritans, ii. 452.
his theology, ii. 452.
his natural religion, ii. 453 (see *Pope*, *Burke*).
Bollandists (see *Lully*).
Bonaventura, difficulties in making out the circumstances of his life, i. 635.
his books, i. 636.
and studies, i. 636.
the "Itinerary," i. 636.
"*De reductione Artium ad Theologiam*," i. 637-644.
where he is feeble, i. 644.
difference from Aquinas and Duns Scotus, i. 645.
admired by Gerson, ii. 45.

Boniface, influence of, on Europe in the thirteenth century, i. 458.
his fall, a punishment on the previous intrigues of the Popes, i. 585.
succeeds Celestine, ii. 12.
contrasted with Celestine, ii. 12.
Bossuet, his complaint of Bellarmin, ii. 153.
his book on the "Knowledge of God," ii. 370-372.
what he respected, ii. 372.
contrasted with Spinoza, ii. 408.
the effect of his divinity, ii. 432.
the cause of his failure, ii. 432.
contrasted with Fenelon, ii. 474.
Bovillus, a biographer of Raymond Lully, i. 665.
Boyle, his effect on natural science, ii. 525.
Brahm, his relation to Agni, i. 38.
relation of the universe to Brahm, i. 39.
he who trusts in the Supreme mixes with Brahm, i. 42.
known to those who trust in Kreeshna, i. 44.
Kreeshna *is* Brahm, i. 49.
Brahm is Buddha, i. 52.
Brahmin, tendency of, to the worst answers about the nature of Brahm, i. 39.
attempts to reconcile philosophical to sacerdotal position of Brahmin, i. 39.
contemplation his business, i. 40.
privilege of, granted by Kreeshna, i. 44.
dignity of, not inconsistent with that of other tribes, i. 48, 49.
how like to the Hebrew, i. 52 (see *Buddhism*).
Brahminism, how far like, and how far unlike the doctrine of the Bhagavad-gita, i. 49.
Bramhall, his attack on Hobbes, ii. 338.
Brandis, Grote's charges against, i. 120.
Brown, Hamilton's opinion of, ii. 581.
Bruno (Giordano), an admirer of Lully, i. 661.
belongs to the South of Italy, ii. 163.
why he became a Dominican, ii. 163, (see *Savonarola*).
his journeys, ii. 163-165.
his wit, ii. 165.
his preference of Lully to Ramus, ii. 166.
Bruno (Giordano), revolt against the church, ii. 167.
in England, ii. 167-172.
his opinion of Englishmen and Englishwomen, ii. 167, 168.
"*La Cena de le Ceneri*," ii. 168.
"*De la Causa Principio et Uno*," ii. 171-183.
his other works, ii. 183, 184.
panegyric on Luther, ii. 184.
at Prague, ii. 185.
thrown into prison in Italy, ii. 185.
carried to Rome, ii. 186.
accused of quibbling, ii. 187.
excommunication and execution, ii. 187-188.
moral of his story, ii. 188.
Brücker, his denunciation of Kant, ii. 630.
Brutus compared with Cato, i. 251.
Buddha (see *Brahm*).
Buddhists, differences of our view of them from the fact, i. 52.
meaning and importance of their movement, i. 53.
difference of their creed at different times, i. 53.
how related to Brahminism, i. 53.
their influence on Eckart (see *Eckart*).
Buchanan, his effect on James I., ii. 206.
Buffon, the model of naturalists in France in the eighteenth century, ii. 530.
Bullinger, of Zurich, receives Ramus warmly, ii. 144.
Bunsen (Baron de), see note at end of Preface.
Bunyan contrasted with Sterry, ii. 351.
Burke (Edmund), specially an Irishman, ii. 586.
his parody on Bolingbroke, ii. 587.
enquiry concerning "Sublime and Beautiful," ii. 588.
relation of his æsthetics to his politics, ii. 589.
thoughts on the cause of present discontents, ii. 590.
appeal from new to old whigs, ii. 590.
relations to American Colonies, ii. 590-591.
his expediency, ii. 591.
imagination, ii. 592.
reflections on the French revolution, ii. 592, 598.
his merits and failures, ii. 593, 594.

Burke (Edmund), lessons to be learnt from him, ii. 595, 596.
  contrasted with Lessing (see *Lessing*).
Burleigh scorned scientific men and poets, ii. 201.
Burns, a witness against professional philosophy, ii. 586.
Butler asserts the existence of a conscience, Preface, xix. xxxiv.
  his distinction between natural and revealed religion, Preface, xx.
  his letters to Clarke, ii. 459, 460.
  how far a follower of Locke, ii. 460.
  his method of argument, ii. 461, 462.
  his doctrine of the conscience, ii. 462, 463.
  the "Analogy," ii. 463-465.
  contrast between him and the Wesleys, ii. 465-466.
  how he helps us to understand Methodism, ii. 466, 468.
  why he wrote, ii. 482.
  contrasted with Leibnitz, ii. 515, 516.
  patronised by Queen Caroline, ii. 523.
  the conclusions he might draw from Locke, ii. 527.
  contrasted with Methodism, ii. 546.
  compared with Hume, ii. 570.
  contrasted with Kant, ii. 636.

Cabanis (Dr.) heads the reaction against Condillac, ii. 662.
Cabbala studied by Reuchlin, ii. 104.
  he misunderstands it, ii. 109.
  Luther does not study it, ii. 110.
Calas, Voltaire's services to, ii. 529.
Callaghan, his assertion of the Irish birth of Duns Scotus, i. 645.
Calvin, Luther's opinion of him, ii. 132.
  more the antagonist of Loyola than Luther was, ii. 134.
  more a Latinist than a Frenchman, ii. 134.
  asserts the Genevan principle, ii. 135, 136.
  ground of his opposition to Loyola, ii. 136, 137 (see *Beza*, Peter the Lombard).
Calvinism, its effect in England, ii. 139.
  in France and Holland, ii. 144.
Cambyses, fanaticism of, i. 81.
Campanus, a fellow-student of Ramus, ii. 142.
Canon Law, cause of reputation of several Popes in the fourteenth century, ii. 12.
Canonists relied on by John XXII., ii. 13.
  difference of, from theologians, ii. 13.
Carpocrates, a Gnostic, i. 290-291.
Carthage contrasted with Alexandria, i. 304.
Cassius (Dio), his view of Seneca, i. 271.
Cato, how like and how unlike Brutus, i. 251.
  Lucan's reverence for, i. 267.
Caterus (see *Descartes*).
Catherine of Russia, her relations to Voltaire, ii. 530.
Catholicism, its effect on England, ii. 137.
Celestine's ignorance of jurisprudence, ii. 12.
  difference from Boniface, ii. 12.
Celt contrasted with Goth, i. 454. (See also *Pelagius*.)
Cesarini (Cardinal Julian), how specially known, ii. 50.
  a friend of Nicolas of Cusa, ii. 50.
Chaldea, philosophy of, how different from Egyptian, i. 35, 36, 340.
  the only records of, i. 37.
Chang dynasty, a sage of, reverenced by Confucius, i. 57.
Charlemagne, permanent effects of his dynasty, i. 458, 459.
  his relations with Alcuin, i. 459, 460.
Charles of Anjou, Savonarola's attitude towards, ii. 78.
Charles I., his struggle with the Parliament, ii. 332.
Charles II., influence on, of Hobbes, ii. 333, 334.
Charles the Bald, his influence on Johannes Scotus, i. 477.
Charpentier, his quarrel with Ramus, ii. 143.
  murders Ramus, ii. 145.
Chaucer, his poetry brings out the national feeling, ii. 32.
Chesterfield introduces Montesquieu to English society, ii. 495.
China, great contrast between it and Hindostan, i. 54.
  old faith of, not necessary to dwell on by itself, i. 54.
  much less high and mysterious than that of most people's, i. 55.

China, obedience the sum of Chinese virtue, i. 55.
  life, morals, and politics, how connected with ceremony, i. 67.
  what intelligence has done for it, i. 68.
  need for supplying defect in Chinese philosophy, i. 73. (See *Khoung-fou-tseu*, *Meng-tseu.*)
Chosroes, the great antagonist of the Greek Empire, i. 409.
  stipulates with Justinian that the philosophers shall live in peace, i. 409.
Christian society, its first rise, i. 259, 260.
  Gospel, why apparently opposed to philosophy, i. 278.
  its relation to philosophy, i. 278, 279.
  theology, how connected with Persian philosophy by Saturninus, i. 288, 289.
  effect of apologists for, i. 291. (See *Justin.*)
  Church, why opposed by Marcus Aurelius, i. 298, 299.
  finds a home in the great cities of the Empire, i. 304.
  ought to contain representatives of different characters, i. 305. (See *Alexandria* and *Tertullian.*)
  idea of an Esoteric doctrine for, i. 313-315. (See *Clemens.*)
  relation to school of philosophers in end of third century (see P*orphy*r*y*, *Iamblichus*).
  Church and Empire in union (see *Constantine*).
  relation of Julian to Christian Church (see *Julian*).
  change of position of, i. 378.
  fights with Neo-Platonism, i. 382.
  services of Gregory to (see *Gregory*).
  faith, how affected by Arianism, i. 404, 405.
  Persian faith how assisted against Christian, i. 409. (See *Boethius*, *Mahometanism*, *Ulphilas.*)
  its struggle with Mahometanism before the fourteenth century, ii. 1, 2, 3.
  effect of Papacy on, ii. 9.
  mysterious side of, ii. 24-38.
  how far opposed by Bruno, ii. 188.
  objections to Christianity (see *Collins*, *Toland*, *Tindal*).
Christina of Sweden, influence of Descartes on, ii. 294.
Chrysippus, his quickness, i. 240.
  completes the Stoical system, i. 241.
Chrysostom, as much a practical man as Cyril, i. 378.
Cicero, his business habits, Preface, xix.
  his account of the Academy, i. 244.
  his love of compromise, i. 251.
  why unlike the Academics, i. 252, 253.
  sentence of Octavius on him, i. 254.
  unlikeness to Philo and the son of Sirach, i. 256.
  his philosophical views, how reconciled to his rhetoric and politics, i. 265.
  his ignorance of Socrates, i. 283.
  his "*Hortensius*," its effect on Augustine, i. 359, 360.
  commentaries of Boethius on his "*Topics*," i. 436.
  quoted by Aquinas, i. 623.
  quoted by Gerson, ii. 45, 46.
  preferred by the Humanists to the Monks, ii. 102.
  criticised by Ramus, ii. 143.
  how far an Eclectic, ii. 581.
Cimon contrasted with Roman heroes, i. 223.
Clarendon, points of sympathy with Hobbes, ii. 335.
  his love of law, ii. 335.
  his quarrel with Hobbes, ii. 336-339.
  likeness of his theories to the current theories of his day, ii. 340.
Clarke (Samuel), his belief in a God of nature, ii. 455.
  what he thought necessary to complete that belief, ii. 455. (See *Butler*, *Leibnitz.*)
Cleanthes, his character and life, i. 240.
  his hymn to Jupiter, i. 240.
  his difference from Chrysippus, i. 240, 241.
  quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, i. 308.
Clemens of Alexandria, his belief in a Divine Guide, i. 307.
  his sympathy with Plato, i. 307, 308.
  relations of two of his treatises to each other, i. 308.
  "O Παιδαγωγός," i. 309, 310.
  the "*Stromata*," i. 311, 312.

Clemens of Alexandria, his use of the word "initiated," i. 313-315.
his eclecticism, i. 315-316.
Clement IV. elected by influence of Bonaventura, i. 637.
his freedom from Nepotism, i. 660. (See *Bacon*, Roger).
offers Bonaventura a bishopric, ii. 637.
Clement VIII. burns the books of Telesio, ii. 163.
his struggle with the Jesuits, ii. 186.
his frankness to Bruno, ii. 186.
Clugni, Peter of (see *Abelard*, *Bernard* of Clairvaux).
Coke (Sir Edward), dangerous rival to Bacon, ii. 201.
Coligny asserts the national principle, ii. 139.
how attracted to Calvinism, ii. 144.
Collins, his objections to Christianity, ii. 455.
Coleridge, his connection of Bacon with Plato, ii. 214.
his influence on England, ii. 664-666.
how he learned to believe in God, ii. 668, 669.
his dislike of Bentham's maxims, ii. 669.
the "*Logo-Sophia*," ii. 670.
"Lay Sermons and Aids to Reflection," ii. 670.
reaction against, ii. 670, 671.
how useful to a party, ii. 671.
contempt of Sir William Hamilton for him, ii. 673.
Columbus, effect of his discoveries, ii. 95.
Comte, his principles, Preface, xxxv.-xxxvii.; ii. 663, 664, 674.
Condillac, his book on "Sensations," ii. 532-535.
worth of his speculations, ii. 535.
how a development of Locke, ii. 535-537.
difference from Helvetius, ii. 537.
Condorcet, his opinion of Voltaire, ii. 491, 493.
his account of the relations of Voltaire to Frederick II., ii. 520. (See *Voltaire*.)
Constance, Council of (see *Huss* and *Gerson*).
Constantine, how far a Platonist, i. 344.
his conversion, i. 345.
unites the Church and empire, i. 345.
misunderstands Arius, i. 346.
Constantine, dislikes Athanasius, i. 347.
Constantinople, Christian institutions introduced into, i. 346.
prelates of, despised by Julian, i. 347.
claims of, in time of Justinian, i. 402.
communicates Greek wisdom to the world, i. 453. (See *Rome*, *Helvetius*.)
Constantius the elder, effect of his training on Constantine, i. 345.
the younger, his feelings towards Athanasius, i. 347.
Consulship, abolition of, connected with expulsion of philosophers by Gibbon, i. 409.
Cordeliers, their disputes, ii. 491.
Cordova, laws of nature studied there in the tenth century, i. 503.
Copernicus, his effect on Bruno, ii. 164, 165.
Corsica, Rousseau's admiration for, ii. 553.
Cosmo de Medici, opinion of Ficinus of him, ii. 60, 61.
difference of his age from that of Lorenzo, ii. 63.
trains Ficinus, ii. 66.
Cousin, his opinion of Proclus, i. 378, 379, 381.
of oriental philosophers, i. 475.
of the age of Abelard, i. 536, 537.
commentaries on Boethius and Porphyry, i. 551.
idea of the relation between Abelard and Roscellinus, i. 551.
points out Anselm's inconsistencies, i. 552.
opinion of Boethius, i. 553.
contest between him and Ritter, i. 564 (note).
his work, ii. 662.
reviewed by Hamilton, ii. 672. (See *Hegel*.)
Covenanters, their recognition of a Divine government, ii. 332.
Cowley, his opinion of Hobbes, ii. 239.
Cowper, his "*Tirocinium*," ii. 541.
Cranmer suspects Luther, ii. 131, 132.
Macaulay's estimate of him, ii. 138.
Cratippus, Greek teacher in Augustan age, i. 247.
Crescens, his share in Justin's death, i. 293 (note).
Critias (see *Plato*).

Cromwell, Hobbes's view of, ii. 289.
his recognition of a Divine government, ii. 332.
would detest the doctrine of Hobbes, ii. 33.
yet Hobbes is accused by Clarendon of favouring him, ii. 336, 337.
influence on Sterry (see *Sterry*).
Crœsus, relation of Greek sages to, i. 88.
of Thales to, i. 89.
Cudworth, the best known of the Cambridge Platonists, ii. 346.
his merit, ii. 347.
his division of the ancient philosophers, ii. 348.
abused by Bolingbroke, ii. 452.
Cronos (Diodorus), a Megarian, i. 138.
Cynic school, the opposite of the Cyrenaic, i. 137.
its character, i. 137. (See *Antisthenes*, *Diogenes.*)
Cyrenaic school ends in Epicurism, i. 135.
relation to Democritus, i. 135. (See *Aristippus*, *Anniceris*, *Hegesias*).
Cyril of Alexandria, how like Chrysostom, and how unlike him (see *Chrysostom*).
Cyrus the elder, an asserter of Ormuzd, i. 79.
Cyrus of Xenophon, a mere bundle of fine qualities and true opinions, i. 134 (see also 78).

Dœmon (See *Socrates*, *Plutarch*).
D'Alembert writes an eloge on Montesquieu, ii. 496.
Damaris mentioned by St. Luke as much as Dionysius the Areopagite, i. 472.
Damascius, one of the last seven philosophers, i. 409.
Dante, his feeling about Popes, Friars, and Italy, i. 674.
Darius Hystaspes, an asserter of Ormuzd, i. 79.
Darwin, his "*Origin of Species*," Preface, xxiv.-xxvi.
De Blyenberg, his mistake about Savonarola, ii. 409.
Decius, his love of discipline, i. 300.
Delphi (god of), i. 85, 88.
Demeter, worship of, i. 87.
Democritus, his character, circumstances, and philosophy, i. 98, 99.
use of his doctrine, i. 99.
Democritus, Epicurus's relation to (see *Epicurus*).
Lucretius's feeling as to, i. 250.
Bacon's opinion of, ii. 223.
Demosthenes, his feeling about Philip, i. 82.
Descartes, his effect, Preface, xix. xxxiv.
explains the age of Encyclopedists, ii. 291.
his birth and education, ii. 291-292.
reasons for leaving France, ii. 292.
his contest with Voet, ii. 293.
dislikes Paris, ii. 293.
his admirers, ii. 293. 294.
his illness and death, ii. 294.
"*Discours de la Methode*," ii. 295-307.
contrasted with Hobbes, ii. 295.
the treatise suppressed, ii. 307.
argument with himself about publishing it, ii. 307-309.
reasons for publishing minor essays, ii. 309.
importance of his work, ii. 310, 311.
his central conviction, ii. 311.
his induction, ii. 312.
confusion of his opponents, ii. 312.
he exposes his own errors, ii. 313.
dedication of his "*Meditations*," ii. 313-316.
preface, ii. 316.
his treatment of "Ideas," ii. 316.
attack of Dr. Caterus, ii. 317.
his answer, ii. 318, 319.
Mersenne intervenes between Hobbes and Descartes, ii. 319.
Hobbes' attack and its value, ii. 319-321.
ground of their differences, ii. 321, 323. (See *Hobbes* and *Malebranche.*)
his doctrines contrasted with those of Malebranche, ii. 357-369.
Arnauld's relation to, ii. 368.
his relations to Spinoza, ii. 374, 375.
deductions from, ii. 396.
his affirmation about the being of man, ii. 436-437.
place which he gives to thought, ii. 438.
transition from, to Locke, ii. 441.
Locke's attitude towards, ii. 442.
Vico's attitude towards, ii. 503.
his opinion of mathematics, ii. 518.
sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489, 490.
De Witt pensions Spinosa, ii. 374.
effect of his death on Spinosa, ii. 374. 375.

Dialectics of Plato, i. 157, 158.
of Aristotle, i. 202, 203.
Epicurus's dislike of, i. 236.
of Chrysippus, i. 240.
of the Stoics, i. 242, 243.
of Ramus, ii. 145, 146.
of Kant, ii. 626.
(See too P*lotinus.*)
Dialogue (see P*lato*).
Diodorus Cronos (see *Cronos*).
Diogenes, the only notorious Cynic, i. 137.
contrasted with Antisthenes, i. 137.
sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
Diogenes Laertius' stories about the seven wise men, i. 88, 93 (notes).
about Thales, i. 89.
about pre-Socratic philosophers, i. 94, 96, 98.
about Plato, i. 138.
Diogenes, one of the seven last philosophers, i. 409.
Diocletian, weakened prestige of Rome, i. 344.
Diomedes and Glaucon, i. 83, 84.
Dionysius, the tyrant (see P*lato*).
Dionysius, the Areopagite, suffers by fraud of amalgamators, i. 471.
Guizot's comments on, i. 472.
the Apostle of Gaul, i. 472.
Abelard's doubts about, i. 548.
Dionysius, of Corinth, comments on the Areopagite, i. 471.
Docetism, i. 289.
Dominic, his proclamation about the wealth of the clergy, i. 586; ii. 20.
Dominicans, their relation to the Franciscans, i. 587-588.
their zeal against heresy, i. 590.
settled in Paris, i. 608.
why persecutors, i. 629, 630.
how like the Franciscans, ii. 17 (see *Savonarola*, *Eckart*, *Tauler*).
the dangers of, ii. 18.
Domitian, his age compared with Nero's and Nerva's, i. 280.
Donatists, Augustine's battle with, i. 348.
Dorians contrasted with Ionians, i. 85.
Dunning, Bentham's admiration for, ii. 602.
Duns Scotus, disputes as to his birthplace, i. 645.
his education, life, and death, i. 646.
his subtlety, i. 646.
the "First Principle of Things," i. 646-655.
Duns Scotus, his relations to Plato, Aristotle, Avicenna, i. 648, 649.
his enemies' belief about his punishment, i. 655.
contrasted with Roger Bacon, i. 655.
his adherence to the maxims of St. Francis, ii. 5.
brings logic and theology into dangerous contact, ii. 7.
his effect on Gerson, ii. 37.
his relation to Occam, ii. 6, 37.
Du Pin, his view of the "Compendium of Theology," ii. 43.

Eadmer's account of Anselm, i. 517-519.
Eberhard, his patronage of Reuchlin, ii. 104.
Ecclesiastes, account of, i. 23.
Ecclesiasticus, i. 257.
Eclecticism (see *Plato*, *Aquinas*, *Cicero*, *Clemens*).
Eck agrees with Luther in admiring Reuchlin, ii. 111.
claims victory over Luther, ii. 118.
Eckart, his birth and education, ii. 19.
his changes, ii. 19.
joins the "Friends of God," ii. 20.
how he had been led to them, ii. 20, 21.
Dr. Schmidt's opinion of his changes, ii. 21.
compared with Johannes Scotus, ii. 22.
his temptations, ii. 22, 23.
his character and principles, ii. 23, 24.
his Christian Buddhism, ii. 24, 25.
loss of moral distinctions, ii. 25.
the Papal Bull against him, ii. 25, 26 (see *Tauler*, *Suso*).
Edward I. tries to overthrow Scotch freedom by legal quibbles, ii. 12.
cannot do it, ii. 32.
Edwards (Jonathan), "The Freedom of the Will," ii. 469-470.
his character, ii. 470-471.
effect of the eighteenth century on him, ii. 471-472.
effect of him on England, ii. 472.
on America, ii. 472.
his relations to Locke and Spinosa, ii. 473.
to Roman Catholic mystics, especially Bossuet and Fenelon, ii. 474.
his test, ii. 474, 475.
his relation to Kant (see *Kant*).

Edgeworth Mr. and Miss, treatises on education, i. 373.
Eeswar (the), or Divine Light, i. 46, 48.
El-Farabi, a Mahometan teacher, i. 590.
Egypt, differences between, and the Jews, i. 10-11.
  memorials of, i. 32, 34.
  compared with Chaldæa, i. 35, 36.
Egyptians, their dogmas quoted by Iamblichus, i. 333.
Eicton, the first of intelligences in Egyptian mythology, i. 340.
Eleatics, their principle, i. 113.
Elenchus (see *Socrates*).
Elizabeth (Queen), her treatment of the Jesuits, ii. 138.
  meaning of her reign, ii. 139.
  Bruno's opinion of her, ii. 168.
Emeth, an Egyptian intelligence, i. 340.
Empedocles (of Agrigentum), influence of his philosophy on Sicily, i. 99.
  "war of the elements," i. 100.
  Aristotle's dislike of, i. 100.
  his life, i. 100.
  his obligations to Pythagoras, i. 103.
Encyclopedists, their characteristics, ii. 528.
Enchiridion contrasted with Arrian's account of Epictetus (see *Arrian*).
England, effect of, on Alcuin, i. 460.
  Anselm's knowledge of, i. 517.
  spirit of, illustrated in John of Salisbury, i. 580.
  claims of, on Duns Scotus, i. 645, 646.
  effect of, on Roger Bacon, i. 656.
  effect of, on William of Occam, ii. 6.
  did not accept Machiavellism, ii. 98.
  effect of, on Elizabeth, ii. 139.
  spirit of, illustrated by Hooker, ii. 190.
  history of, the best help to an Englishman in understanding foreign history, ii. 205-207.
  effect of, on Clarendon, ii. 335-336.
  spirit of, illustrated by Locke, ii. 433-434.
  how saved from dangers of unbelief, ii. 483.
  opinions of Voltaire on (see *Voltaire*).
  cultivates the powers of Burke, ii. 586-587.
  influence of Coleridge on (see *Coleridge*).
  her rule over India, ii. 675-676.
Enoch, Bacon's opinion of, ii. 228.
Epictetus, difference from Seneca, i. 271 272.
  a practical philosopher, i. 272.
  his book, i. 272-274.
  difference from Chrysippus and Seneca, i. 274.
  contrasted with Marcus Aurelius, i. 294, 296-297.
Epicurus belongs to age of books, yet has left little, i. 232.
  boast of originality, i. 235.
  his doctrine of Sensation, i. 236.
  a mere copyist, i. 237.
  dislike of law and science, i. 238.
  relations to Lucretius, i. 250.
  to Cicero, i. 252.
  quoted by Seneca, i. 268.
  sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
  Locke's relation to, according to Vico, ii. 503.
Erasmus, friendship for More, ii. 100.
  his hatred of folly, ii. 100, 101.
  his wit, ii. 101.
  hopes from Leo X., ii. 102.
  a destroyer of philosophies, ii. 102.
  his Humanism, ii. 102, 103.
  his view of Reuchlin's pamphlet, ii. 106.
  dislikes Luther, ii. 131. (See also *Luther*.)
Ernesti, his influence on Lessing, ii. 608.
Eubulides the Megarian, i. 138.
Euclides of Megara, his feelings towards Socrates, i. 137, 138.
  his inquiry, i. 137.
  Plato's acquaintance with, i. 140.
  studies principles of logic, i. 187.
Eugenius IV. (See *Nicolas* of Cusa, *Ferrara,* Council of.)
Euripides, quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, i. 308.
Eurytus, a later Pythagorean, i. 108.
Eusebius, his collection of the writings of Numenius, i. 302, 304.
  how suited to Constantine, i. 347-348.
Eutyches, his heresy, i. 377.
Exodus, book of, i. 9.

Fables, Plato's use of, i. 172 (note).
Falcodi, Papal legate in time of Henry III., i. 659.
Falkland, his connection with Hyde, ii. 335.
Familists, Henry More frightened by, ii. 348.

Fatamites, a Mahometan sect, i. 459.
Fenelon writes against Malebranche, ii. 370.
  likeness of his doctrine of love to that of Jonathan Edwards (see *Edwards*).
  the cause of his failure, ii. 432.
Ferdinand the Catholic, one of the three Magians, ii. 98.
Ferrara (Council of), called by Eugenius IV., ii. 50.
  fails in its objects, ii. 51.
Fichte, a seeker for freedom, ii. 655.
  why denounced by Schelling (see *Schelling*).
Ficinus (Marsilius) dedication of his attack on Plotinus to Lorenzo, ii. 60-62.
  his superstitions, ii. 66
  his translations, ii. 67.
  ignores Socrates, ii. 67.
  his honesty, ii. 69.
  his quarrel with existing philosophy, ii. 70.
  search after the Divine, ii. 70-71.
  his motives, ii. 71, 72.
  on miracles, ii. 73.
Fidantius, father of Bonaventura, i. 635.
Filmer, his theory, ii. 447.
Flaminius, his effect on Greece, i. 249.
Fletcher (see *Shakspeare*).
Florence, central city of the latter half of fifteenth century, ii. 94, 95. (See *Savonarola*, Lorenzo.)
Florus attacks Johannes Scotus, i. 468.
Fourier, his ideas of society, ii. 661, 662.
Fox (George), points of sympathy with Cromwell, ii. 333.
  (Charles James), his sympathy with French revolution, ii. 592.
France, effect of the policy of repression on, ii. 483-484.
  how affected by Voltaire's letters on England, ii. 488.
  tyranny in, its effect on the reception of Montesquieu's book, ii. 498-499.
  takes the place of England in philosophy in latter half of eighteenth century, ii. 523.
  effect of Jesuits on, ii. 542.
  influence on Hume, ii. 580.
  and of Reid on, ii. 580.
  effect of time since the revolution on, ii. 661-664.
Francis (St.) of Assisi, his watchword, i. 586.
  relation to Bonaventura, i. 635.
  his life written by Bonaventura, i. 636.
  in the *Paradiso*, i. 674.
  influence on Duns Scotus, ii. 5.
Francis I. establishes rival colleges to the Sorbonne, ii. 141.
Franciscans, rise of, i. 586.
  relations to Dominicans (see *Dominicans*).
  feelings about Bonaventura and Duns Scotus, i. 645.
  effect of their life on Roger Bacon. i. 657.
  they suppress him, i. 659.
  types of (see *Bonaventura*, *Occam*).
  division in the Order, ii. 10.
Francke leads the Pietists against Wolff. ii. 519.
Franklin (Benjamin), cheered at Paris with Voltaire, ii. 530.
Frederick Barbarossa (see *Arnold* of Brescia).
Frederick II. of Germany more a Sicilian than a German, ii. 161.
  establishes an academy in Naples, ii 161, 162.
Frederick of Prussia, his relations with Voltaire, ii. 519-521.
Froissart, his desire to exalt knights, ii. 32.
  his account of Van Artevelde, ii. 32.

Galileo, Hume's opinion of, as compared with Bacon, ii. 212.
  how far just, ii. 212.
Gallienus, friendship of Plotinus for, i. 327.
Gallio, letter of Seneca to, i. 268.
Gassendi makes friends with Hobbes ii. 237.
Gaul, schools of (see *Alcuin*).
  apostles of (see *Dionysius* the Areopagite).
Gaunilon writes a "Book on behalf of the Fool," i. 524-526.
  controversy with Anselm, i. 524-527.
Genesis, book of, i. 5-9 (see *South*).
Geneva, its influence on Europe through Calvin, ii. 135.
  on Rousseau, ii. 552-553.
Genlis (Madame de), her training of Louis Philippe, ii. 40.
Gennadius, his position in Constantinople, and defence of Plato, ii. 63-65.

George III., his hatred of philosophy, ii. 524.
his protest against Atheism (see *Johnson*).
Gerbert, his character and politics, i. 504.
stories about him, how they gathered round him, i. 505.
defence of his love for emperors, i. 505.
stands on threshold of eleventh century, i. 506.
Germany, missionaries to, feel force of parallel between Eucharist and heathen sacrifice, i. 465.
centre of a healthier power than old Rome, i. 503.
Mystics of, ii. 17.
her debt to Reuchlin, ii. 103.
the battle there, ii. 106.
emigration of Melancthon, importance of, to her, ii. 110.
Germanizing of Luther and the Bible, ii. 119.
her "anguish," its effect on Böhme, ii. 330.
victory of France over, through Voltaire, ii. 520.
philosophy of, in time of Wolff, ii. 606.
Lessing's view of, ii. 609.
movement of thought in, after French revolution, ii. 655-661.
Gerson (Jean Charlier), his account of Bonaventura, i. 636, 637.
illustrative of his period, ii. 34.
his dread of the German Mystics, ii. 39.
his proof of disinterestedness, ii. 39.
his education, ii. 39-40.
his desire for unity, ii. 40.
his concern in the death of Huss, ii. 40-41.
his idea of toleration, ii. 40-41.
difference in his objects from those of Huss, ii. 41-42.
"*Liber de Vitâ Spirituali*," ii. 43-45.
not probably the author of the "Imitation of Christ," ii. 45-46.
"*Mystica Theologia* Pr*actica*," ii. 46.
"*Dialogue Spirituel*," ii. 46.
"*De Triplici Theologia*," ii. 46-48.
he has to fly from Paris, ii. 49.
his subsequent life, ii. 49.
his opinion of the Brothers of the Free Spirit, ii. 49.
Gibbon, his view of the clergy, i. 120 (note).
his view of Nerva's age, i. 280.
his view of the abolition of the consulship, i. 409.
how he would affect a student of Paley, ii. 600.
Gnostics, how related to Persian philosophy, i. 288.
to the Christians, i. 289-291.
to the empire, i. 289.
Godeschalcus contrasted with Luther, i. 462-463.
with Hincmar, i. 468.
his struggle with Johannes Scotus, i. 477, 478.
Godfrey de Bouillon, character of his crusade, i. 534.
Godwin, Burke's feeling towards, ii. 595-596.
Goethe, his position in the century, ii. 608.
his experimentalism, ii. 637 (see also *Herder*, *Jacobi*).
Goldsmith, his opinion of Burke, ii. 590, 591.
Gomarists, their quarrel with the Arminians, ii. 323.
Görlitz, birth-place of Böhme (see *Böhme*).
Goth (see *Celt*).
Greece opposed to Asia from earliest times, i. 82.
counsel the chief quality of their gods, i. 82, 83.
their theology contrasted with the Persian, i. 83.
silence not characteristic of, i. 84.
common feeling of different tribes of, i. 85.
people of, unlike the Brahmins, i. 86.
history of, connection of the seven wise men with, i. 87-88.
growth of scepticism in, i. 92.
how distinguished from barbarous countries, i. 93.
the country of wise men, i. 114. (See *Athens.*)
Greek, confusions to which he was liable, i. 95, 96.
Anaxagoras, how unlike, i. 100.
sages poetic, i. 108.
logic discovered by, i. 113.
Socrates a thorough Greek, i. 125.
Alexander made a Greek by Aristotle, i. 178.
after time of Alexander, i. 231-235.

Greek, contrast between Greeks and Romans, i. 251, 253.
  feelings strong in Corinthian followers of St. Paul, i. 259, 260.
  Latin of the empire strongly contrasted with the Greek in the second century, i. 281.
  Apologists (see *Justin*).
  element in the code of Justinian, i. 402.
  world separation of, from Latins, i. 410.
  literature banished by Gregory the Great, i. 412.
  Church, attempt to reconcile feud with Latin Church, ii. 51.
  Greek culture, hope for revival of (see *Nicolas* of Cusa).
  reasons for its revival, by Cosmo de Medici, ii. 65-66.
Gregory the Great, separates East from West, i. 410, 412.
  his attitude to literature, i. 411-413.
  feelings of Protestants towards, i. 413, 414.
  his leading idea, i. 414-415.
  his effect on the Papacy, i. 417.
  on language, i. 418. (See also *Protestants.*)
Gregory XIII. carries Bellarmin to Rome, ii. 153.
Gregory of Nyssa, appealed to by Johannes Scotus, i. 496.
Gregory of Nazianzum, exhibits principles of Church as foundation of life, i. 408.
Greville, Bruno's acquaintance with, ii. 167, 168.
Grosseteste, his quarrel with the Franciscans, i. 658. (See *Bacon*, Roger.)
Grote, description of Pythagorean Society, i. 106.
  his account of the Sophists, i. 117, 118, 120.
  opinion of Aristophanes, i. 117.
  name for tyrants, i. 118.
  his view of the "Choice of Hercules," i. 120 (note).
  his defence of the execution of Socrates, i. 130-131.
Grotius, feebleness of his position in spite of his abilities, ii. 323.
  De Jure Belli et Pacis, ii. 323-324.
  inferiority to Böhme, ii. 325. (See also *Vico.*)
Guardian, effect on writers in, of Montaigne, ii. 150.
Guelph, Dante changed from, into a Ghibelline, i. 674.
Guillielmus de St. Amore answered by Bonaventura, i. 636.
Guion, Madame, her doctrine of disinterested love, ii. 474.
  finds sometimes a resting-place in mere Being, ii. 474.
Guizot, his connection of the work of British missionaries in Germany with the French revolution, i. 458.
  his opinion of Hincmar and Johannes Scotus, i. 468.
  of Dionysius the Areopagite, i. 471, 472.
  of Johannes Scotus, i. 473, 474, 475, 485.
  conseqences of this opinion, i. 476.
  his opinion of Eckart, ii. 21.

Halifax, his likeness to and appreciation of Montaigne, ii. 150.
Hallam, his estimate of Nicolas V. and Gregory I., i. 411.
  his criticism on Hooker, ii. 193.
Hamilton (Sir William), are we to follow him? Preface, xxxiv.
  his doctrine of the Infinite, Preface, xxxviii.
  his review of Cousin, ii. 672-673.
  how his doctrines may be interpreted, ii. 673.
Hartley, David, compared with Edwards, ii. 475.
  his profession, ii. 475.
  his idea of association, ii. 476.
    of vibrations, ii. 476, 477.
  use of his speculations, ii. 477, 478.
  his view of Locke, ii. 508.
  compared with Hume, ii. 568.
  his attraction for Coleridge, ii. 668.
Hartlib, Milton's letter to, compared with Augustine's "*Contra Academicos*," i. 373.
  with Rousseau's "*Emile*," ii. 543.
Harvey, Descartes' gratitude to, and deductions from, ii. 306.
Hebrew Scriptures, their language about and relation to other nations, Preface, xvii. xxx. xxxi.
  their relation to philosophy, i. 5.
  the elements of their philosophy, where found, i. 5-13.
  their actual philosophy, i. 19-25.
Hebrew prophets, i. 26-31.
Hebrew nation, relations to Egyptians, i. 32-35.

- *Hebrew* nation, relation to Assyrians, i. 36.
  - contrasted with the Hindoo, i. 50, 51.
  - position in Alexandria, i. 256-259.
  - relation to philosophy, i. 276-278.
  - attitude of the "Apologists" towards, i. 291-293.
  - Reuchlin's attitude towards, ii. 104-106.
  - what they may yet do, ii. 676. (See also *Jacobi*, *Spinoza.*)
- *Hegel*, his logic, Preface, xxxiv.; ii. 656-657.
  - disputes about him in Germany, Preface, xxxviii.
  - his friendship with Cousin, ii. 662.
- *Hegesias*, a Cyrenaic, i. 136.
- *Helvetius*, his love of novelty, ii. 537.
  - *Discours de l'Esprit*, ii. 538, 539.
  - Mackintosh's opinion of him, how far just, ii. 539, 540.
- *Henry* II. of England, his struggle with Becket (see *Becket*).
- *Henry* III. of England deluded by the Friars of Innocent IV., i. 658.
  - Falcodi's interference between Henry and his Barons, i. 659.
- *Henry* III. of France patronizes Bruno, ii. 167.
- *Henry* IV., court of, less embodies the moral tone of the century than that of our James I., ii. 210.
- *Henry* VII. of England one of Bacon's "three Magians," ii. 98.
  - though unscrupulous not wholly ignoble, ii. 98.
  - contrasted with Henry VIII., ii. 98.
  - links the fifteenth century to the sixteenth, ii. 204.
- *Henry* VIII. of England not a Machiavellian, ii. 98.
  - wishes to patronize Cornelius Agrippaii. 126.
  - fulfils with Elizabeth the promises of the opening of the Tudor period, ii. 204.
  - quarrel with Luther (see *Luther*).
- *Heraclitus*, of Ephesus, illustrates the Greek confusion of the Counsellor with the soul, i. 95, 96.
  - his love of law, but dislike of the Greek democracy, i. 96.
  - idea of the central force, i. 96.
  - and of fire, i. 96, 97.
  - of Zeus, i. 97.
  - "the crying philosopher," i. 97.
- *Herder*, an eighteenth century Humanist, ii. 638-639.
  - his ideas, ii. 640-642.
  - contrasted with Vico, i. 642.
  - his two religions, ii. 643, 644.
  - light thrown on him by Goethe, ii. 644.
- *Herennius*, his betrayal of the secrets of the Magians, i. 317.
- *Hermes*, the Egyptian, his doctrine, i. 340; ii. 67.
- *Hermes*, the Greek god, his position in Greek theology, i. 87.
- *Hermias*, one of the seven last wise men driven out by Justinian, i. 409.
- *Hermogenes*, an Alexandrian Gnostic, i. 290.
- *Herodotus* brings out opposition between Greece and Asia, i. 82.
  - his view of Thales, i. 89.
  - of the Persian worship, i. 77.
  - inferiority to Thucydides, i. 117.
- *Hesiod*, quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, i. 308.
- *Hildebrand*, to whom he owed his greatness, i. 506, 507.
  - his feelings towards Berengarius (see *Berengarius*).
  - contrast with Innocent III. (see *Innocent* III.)
- *Hincmar*, chosen by Guizot as representing theological tendencies of his time, i. 468.
  - an ally of Johannes Scotus, i. 477.
- *Hindoo* Vedas, i. 37.
  - worship, i. 37, 38.
  - connection between priesthood and philosophy, i. 39.
  - the castes, i. 40.
  - the Bhagavad-gita (see *Bhagavad-gita*).
  - Vedas contrasted with Bhagavad-gita, i. 49.
  - philosophy, soul the object of, i. 50.
    - contrasted with the Hebrew, i. 50.
  - interest of, i. 51, 52.
  - speculations contrasted with the Chinese, i. 54.
- *Hoadly*, Law an opponent of, ii. 326.
- *Hobbes*, how he brought out embarrassments working in other men's minds, ii. 209.
  - connection of his ethics with his politics, ii. 212.
  - his autobiography, ii. 235-238.
  - object of the "Leviathan," ii. 237.

Hobbes, misrepresentations of the "Leviathan," ii. 237.
the "*De Corpore*," ii. 238.
his sincerity, ii. 238.
his ethics, ii. 238.
love of Homer, ii. 239.
Cowley's opinion of him (see *Cowley*).
his self-praise, ii. 239.
his search for motive power, ii. 239, 240.
"Elements of Philosophy," ii. 240-244.
great charm, ii. 243-344.
his relation to students of physical science, ii. 245.
the "*De Cive*," ii. 246-276.
the "Leviathan," ii. 276-290.
his theory of passive obedience, ii. 290.
compared with Spinoza, ii. 394-410.
need for inquiry into his conclusions, ii. 439.
feelings of Edwards towards, ii. 470.
sympathy felt for him, ii. 439.
uselessness of the attacks on him, ii. 439.
attacked by Bentley, ii. 478.
contrasted with Montesquieu, ii. 498.
his controversy with Descartes (see *Descartes*).
Pascal's attack on him (see *Pascal*).
likeness to Pearson (see *Pearson*).
Holland, effect on, of Calvin, ii. 134.
of the strife of Gomarists and Arminians, ii. 323.
of Grotius, ii. 324.
Spinoza's idea of its duty, ii. 392.
Homer brings out contest between Greece and Asia, i. 82.
gives prominence to the Council Chamber, i. 84.
linked by Empedocles to Pindar and Lucretius, i. 100.
difference of his Zeus from the Nous of Anaxagoras, i. 101, 102.
inferior in recognition of principle to Sophocles, i. 117.
why studied in the age of Pericles, i. 140.
his effect on Greece, i. 171.
quoted by Clemens of Alexandria, i. 308.
(See *Vico*, *Wolff*, *Hobbes*.)
Homœomeriæ, theory of, i. 101.
Hooker, influence of his circumstances on his books, ii. 189-190.
would not have understood Bruno, ii. 190.
Hooker, nor be understood by foreigners ii. 190.
Keble's and Walton's opinion of him, ii. 190.
the ecclesiastical polity, ii. 190-191.
his first sermon, ii. 191-192.
likeness to Elizabeth, ii. 192.
asserts law against opinion, ii. 192, 193.
difference from Luther, ii. 193.
his Calvinism, ii. 194, 195.
his assertion of a position for the civil ruler, ii. 196.
difference from modern writers in church and state, ii. 196-198.
contrasted with Bacon, ii. 202.
Howard of Effingham, an asserter of the national principle, ii. 139.
Hugo de St. Victoire contrasted with Abelard, i. 565-566.
his book "*De Sacramentis*," i. 566-570.
his position in a history of philosophy, i. 570.
Humanists of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries contrasted, ii. 639 (see *Erasmus*, *Luther*, *Reuchlin*, *Montaigne*.)
Humanity, a favourite word of Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 62, 63.
Bacon's use of the word, ii. 224.
worship of (see *Comte*).
Hume, his contempt for Anselm and Eadmer, i. 518.
Rousseau's opinions of him, ii. 559-560.
his autobiography, ii. 560-562.
his inquiry concerning human understanding, ii. 562.
effect on him of Voltaire, ii. 563.
his "History," ii. 563-565.
unlikeness to Johnson and George III., ii. 565.
his "Principles of Morals," and its effect, ii. 565-567.
his "Essay on Miracles," ii. 567-576.
criticisms on Locke, ii. 567-568.
contrasted with Hartley, ii. 568.
his attitude towards the Methodists, ii. 572-573.
the "Natural History of Religion," ii. 576-577.
how co-operates with Adam Smith, ii. 578.
contrasted with Reid, ii. 582-585.
with Burns, ii. 586.

Hume, effect of, on a student of Paley, ii. 600.
  compared with Bentham, ii. 604, 605.
  deserted by Kant, ii. 631.
  Kant's opposition to, ii. 634, 635.
  attributes ignorance to all men, ii. 673.
  criticised by Paley (see *Paley*).
  criticised by Kant (see *Kant*).
  contrasted with Kant (see *Kant*).
Hurd, his attack on Hume, ii. 561.
Huss, the best representative of the fourteenth century, ii. 34.
  his hatred of the Germans, ii. 34, 35.
  of the Popes, ii. 35.
  moralist rather than metaphysician, ii. 35.
  his relation to Wycliffe, ii. 36.
  eagerness for the Counsel of Constance, ii. 40.
  his death, and Gerson's share in it, ii. 40-41.
  truth his object, ii. 41.
Hutten (Ulrich von), writes the *Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum*, ii. 106.
Hutton (R. H.), essays of, Preface, xxxviii. (note.)
Huxley, his lessons, Preface, xxiv.
Hypatia, murder of, illustrates state of Alexandria at the time, i. 378.

Iconoclasm, result of Mahometanism, i. 453.
Iamblichus or Abammon, his search for a brotherhood, i. 108.
  the teacher of Anebon, i. 333.
  answers Porphyry, i. 333.
  the book "περὶ μυτησιων," i. 333-341.
  the views of the Church about him, i. 341-343.
  attempts to resuscitate Polytheism, i. 346.
  Julian's admiration for, i. 353.
  greater than the Stoics of Marcus Aurelius, i. 356.
  school of, triumphant, i. 473.
  appealed to by Agrippa, ii. 128.
Ibas condemned by Justinian, i. 406.
Ignatius, head of the Church in Antioch, i. 286.
  Trajan's feelings towards this society, i. 286.
  his dialogue with Trajan, i. 286, 287.
  the meaning of his testimony, i. 287.
  his condemnation, i. 287, 288.
  his idea of good and evil contrasted with the Persian idea, i. 288.
Ihn Sina, a Mahometan teacher, i. 590.
India, a world of books, i. 37.
  Burke's interest in, ii. 592.
  our duty towards, ii. 675, 676.
Indra, the Hindoo feelings towards, i. 49.
Innocent III., the thirteenth century not his age, i. 585.
  difference between his object and that of Hildebrand, i. 585.
  not so important as the Mendicant Orders, i. 586.
Innocent IV., his extortions in England, i. 658.
  attacked by Grosseteste and Bacon, i. 658, 659.
Innocent VIII. complimented by Pico de Mirandola, ii. 77.
Ionians (see *Dorians*).
Ionic school, i. 93.
Isidore, one of the last Greek Philosophers driven out by Justinian, i. 409.
Islam (see *Mahomet*, *Mahometanism*).
Ithaca, love of Odysseus for, i. 84.

Jacob his character, i. 8.
Jacobins, their establishment in France, i. 608.
Jacobi, his connection with Goethe, ii. 644.
  his connection with Lessing, ii. 644, 645.
  his want of understanding of the Jews, ii. 645.
  his conversations with Lessing, ii. 645-648.
  correspondence with Mendelssohn, ii. 648-651.
  his lesson to us, ii. 654.
  his "Ignorance," ii. 673.
James I., effect of his character and dynasty in England, ii. 205.
  how typical of his time, ii. 206-207.
  what he represented, ii. 207.
  his opinions, ii. 208.
  lessons from his life, ii. 209.
  his court more typical of the time than that of Henry IV. of France, ii. 210.
  why Bacon might expect sympathy from him, ii. 216.
  his profane jest on Bacon, ii. 218.
  preferred the "Advancement of Learning," to the "*Novum Organum*," ii. 218.

Jammy, his life of Albertus Magnus, i. 596.
Jansenists, Pascal's sympathy with, ii. 365, 366.
  miracles of, alluded to by Hume, ii. 571.
  quarrels with Malebranche (see *Arnauld*, *Malebranche*).
  crushed by the Jesuits, ii. 483, 484.
  Augustin's effect on (see *Augustin*).
Jerome preferred by Erasmus to Augustin, ii. 111.
Jesuits, their crushing out of individual tastes, ii. 136.
  causes of their success, ii. 136, 137.
  difference from Luther and St. Paul, ii. 137.
  Elizabeth's hostility to, ii. 138, 139.
  influence of their creed on Bellarmin and Mariana (see *Bellarmin*, *Mariana*).
  their use of the Augustinian theory, ii. 366.
  their opinion of Locke, ii. 576.
  their attack on Ramus (see *Ramus*).
Jews, *Jewish* (see *Hebrew*).
Joan, her influence on Hooker (see *Hooker*).
Joan of Arc, Voltaire's treatment of, ii. 530, 564.
Job, book of, time of, i. 24.
  reality, i. 24.
  philosophy, i. 25.
  Bruno's view of, ii. 171 (note).
  his account of the Leviathan admired by Hobbes, ii. 276.
  Jacobi's quotation from, ii. 651.
  appropriateness of, as a conclusion to the History of Moral Philosophy, ii. 652.
Johannes Scotus, the metaphysician of the ninth century, i. 467.
  Guizot's view of him (see *Guizot*).
  his birth and character, i. 476, 477.
  his interest in the Predestinarian controversy, i. 477, 478.
  how he offended his contemporaries, i. 478.
  the books "*De Divisione Naturæ*," i. 479-482.
  his object, i. 482, 483.
  his difficulties, i. 483.
  worth of his speculations, i. 484.
  summary of doctrine of his first book, i. 484.
  defence of his doctrine, i. 484, 485.
Johannes Scotus, influence on him of doctrine of Trinity, i. 487, 488.
  meaning of his fourth division, i. 486.
  uses of analysis, i. 487.
  principle of the book, i. 487.
  likeness and unlikeness to Plato, i. 488, 490.
  third book, i. 491-494.
  fourth book, i. 494-499.
  fifth book, i. 497-501.
  what our judgment of him should be, i. 501.
  contrasted with Eckart, ii. 21, 22.
John (St.), his proclamation, i. 260.
  quoted by Hobbes, ii. 269.
John XXII., his quarrel with Occam, ii. 10.
John of Salisbury, a man of the world, i. 578.
  therefore useful, i. 578.
  the "*Polycraticus*," 18th cap. of second book, i. 578-580.
  attacks Astrology, i. 580.
  seventh book, i. 580-583.
  lessons to be learned from him, i. 583, 584.
Johnson (Samuel), his position and creed, ii. 527.
  forbids the marriage of Atheism and Toryism, ii. 565.
  his blunder about Bentham, ii. 603.
Jonson (Benjamin), his sympathy with Bacon, ii. 235.
  (See *Shakspeare*.)
Joseph, his relation with Pharaoh, i. 32.
Josephus, his dishonesty, i. 32.
Julian, his early training, i. 347.
  importance of his history, i. 347, 348.
  his lost books, i. 352, 353.
  letters to Libanius, i. 353, 354.
  "The Cæsars," i. 354-356.
  his love of nature, i. 356.
  his "Hymn to the Sun," i. 357.
  his opposition to Athanasius, i. 357.
Jupiter (character of), i. 245.
Justin, the earliest Greek apologist, i. 291.
  his dialogue with Trypho, i. 291-293.
  his position, i. 293.
  his death, i. 293.
  especially a philosopher, i. 472.
  his reference to Dionysius the Areopagite, i. 472.
Justinian, one of the remarkable names of the sixth century, i. 401.
  connection of his life with philosophy, i. 402.

Justinian, as a legislator, i. 402, 403.
- reasons for homage to the Popes, i. 403, 404.
- his conquests, i. 404.
- contrasted with Athanasius, i. 405.
- his Anti-Platonism, i. 405.
- his war with the dead, especially with Origen, i. 406.
  - with the philosophers, i. 407-409.
- abolishes the consulship (see *Consulship*, abolition of).
- his use, i. 410.

Juvenal contrasted with Seneca, i. 267.

Kant, his attempt to fix limitations to the human mind, Preface, xix.
- his lectures, ii. 619.
- his books, ii. 619.
- unfortunate in the phrase associated with his name, ii. 620.
- his relations to Locke, ii. 620, 621.
- unlikeness to Wolff, ii. 621, 622.
- his criticism on Hume, ii. 622.
- sifting experiences, ii. 623.
- his likeness to Locke, ii. 623, 624.
- his logic, ii. 625.
- contrasted with Berkeley, ii. 625.
- "*Die Transcendentale Logik*," ii. 625-628.
- "Transcendental Dialectic," ii. 628, 629.
- his difference from Aristotle, ii. 630.
- contrasted with Plato, ii. 630.
- his Organon compared with Aristotle's, ii. 631.
- the ideas of the reason, ii. 631-633.
- his belief in a *moral* world, ii. 632, 633.
- "*Kritik der practischen Vernunft*," ii. 633-634.
- contrasted with Hume and Paley, ii. 634, 635.
- his relations to Berkeley, Leibnitz, and Edwards, ii. 635.
- contrasted with Butler, ii. 636.
- Jacobi's judgment of, ii. 647.
- likeness to Locke, ii. 653.
- his assertion of reason, ii. 654.
- influence on Coleridge, ii. 665, 668.
- Hamilton's appeal to, ii. 673.

Keble, his opinion of Hooker's temper, ii. 190.

Kempis, Thomas à, characteristics of the "Imitation of Christ," ii. 45.
- why not likely to be, by Gerson, ii. 45, 46.
- Milman's criticism on, ii. 46.

Kepler, Bruno's acquaintance with, ii. 185.

Khoung-fou-tseu, his difference from the sages of India, i. 54.
- expounds Chinese history, i. 54.
  - and faith, i. 54, 55.
- reasons for this power, i. 55.
- the "Lun-yu," i. 56-61.
- contrasted with Socrates, i. 57.
- conclusions from his book, i. 61-64.
- the "Tchoung Young," i. 64-67.
- Chinese ceremonial, i. 67, 68.
- relations to Meng-tseu (see *Meng-tseu*).
- his deepest wisdom, i. 73.
- his biography contrasted with that of Zerduscht, i. 73.

Knox, in his conflict with Mary, influenced by Calvin, ii. 134.
- his belief in a God of righteousness, ii. 340.

Kreeshna (see *Bhagavad-gita*, *Brahm*).

Kshatree, a Hindoo tribe, i. 78.

Kshetra (or body), what it consists of, i. 45.

Kshetra-gna, the usurping power of the body, i. 46.

Laopang, honoured by Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 57, 58.

Lanfranc, his assistance to Herluinus in the monastery at Bec, i. 508.
- his birth and parentage, i. 508.
- goes to Italy and France, i. 508.
- his conversion, i. 509.
- his entry into the monastery, i. 509.
- his effect on the abbey, i. 509, 510.
- his life there, i. 510.
- interview with William of Normandy, i. 510.
- controversy with Berengarius, i. 511-514.
- his true position, i. 514.
- contrasted with Anselm, i. 514, 516, 517.

Lange, his persecution of Wolff, ii. 519.

Lastidianus, a cousin of Augustin's, i. 374.

Law, feeling of Heraclitus for, i. 96.
- of Aquinas for, i. 626.
- of Hooker (see *Hooker*).

Law (William), influence of Boehme on, i. 325, 326.
- contrasted with Tertullian, i. 326.
- his humiliation, i. 326, 327.

Leibnitz, no strong patriotism in him, ii. 505.
- contrasted with Locke, ii. 505.
- his criticisms, ii. 505, 506.

Leibnitz, his faith in his system, ii. 506.
- lessons to be learnt from him, ii. 507.
- first book of the "*Noveaux Essais*," ii. 507.
- his great maxim, ii. 508.
- ideas and perceptions, ii. 509.
- his disputes with Newton, ii. 510, 522.
- his respect for the "little," ii. 510.
- feeling for the Infinite, ii. 510.
- the "*Theodicée*," ii. 510, 511.
- his opinion of Bayle, ii. 511, 512.
- to whom Leibnitz is of use, ii. 512.
- what he did, ii. 512.
- the rest of the "*Theodicée*," ii. 512, 513.
- his controversy with Descartes, ii. 513, 514.
- point of agreement with Spinoza, ii. 514.
- his optimism, ii. 514, 515.
- contrasted with Vico, ii. 515.
- his circumstances, ii. 515.
- letters to Dr. Clarke, ii. 515-517.
- his relations with Queen Caroline, ii. 515, 523.
- contrasted with Swedenborg, ii. 522.
- his admiration for Locke, ii. 523.
- his relations to Kant, ii. 635.

Le Maistre, why he was listened to, ii. 671.

Leo IX. helped by the Normans, i. 507.

Leo IV., his heroism, i. 595.

Leo X., the age of, ii. 102.
- his feeling about the sale of indulgences, ii. 116 (see too *Clement* IV.)

Lessing, his discoveries about Berengerius, i. 512.
- contrasted with Goethe, ii. 608.
- his training and studies, ii. 608, 609.
- his love of the stage, and acquaintance with Madame Neuber, ii. 609.
- his philosophy of Sensation, ii. 609.
- contrasted with Wolff, ii. 609, 610.
  - with Burke, ii. 610.
- his criticism, ii. 610, 611.
- the Laocoon, ii. 610, 611.
- criticism on Pope, ii. 611.
- teaches a science of art, ii. 611.
- his Romanism and Protestantism, ii. 612.
- his æsthetics and philology, ii. 612, 613.
- his scepticism, ii. 613.
- the "Wolfenbüttel Fragments," ii. 614, 615.
- dislike of the Lutherans for him, ii. 615, 616.

Lessing, '*Nathan der Weise*," ii. 616.
- "*Ernst und Falk*," ii. 616, 617.
- "*Die Erziehung des Menschen-geshlechts*," ii. 617, 618.
- his faith, ii. 618.
- his services, ii. 619.
- an exception proving the rule, ii. 637.
- impulse given by him to philology and art, ii. 637, 638.

Libanius, letters of Julian to, i. 353.

Licinius, his use of Paganism, i. 346.

Licentius, a friend of Augustin, i. 374.

Livy, his history, i 245-246.
- Hume's view of, ii. 574.

Locke, a man of the world, Preface, xix.
- his confutation of the existence of innate notions. i. 191.
- contrasted with Hobbes, ii. 290.
- opposed to Malebranche, ii. 355.
- careful treatment of him necessary, ii. 433.
- ideas connected with his name, ii. 434.
- "Essay on the Human Understanding," quotation from, ii. 434, 435.
- his view of ontology, ii. 435-437.
- his method, ii. 437.
- considerations which might have occurred to Locke, ii. 438-441.
- contrasted with Descartes, ii. 441, 442.
- how far a philosopher of Sensation, ii. 442-444.
- an ideaist if not an idealist, ii. 444.
- his psychology, ii. 445, 446.
- ethics, ii. 446.
- politics, ii. 447, 448.
- prophetic of the time, ii. 448.
- influence on Shaftesbury, ii. 449, 451, 454.
- "Treatise on Education," ii. 451.
- Berkeley connected with, ii. 458.
- compared with Butler, ii. 460.
- criticised by Hartley, ii. 476.
- extent and limits of his influence, ii. 479, 480.
- "Essay on Toleration," ii. 481-483.
- contrasted with Andrè, ii. 486.
- criticised by Voltaire, ii. 488, 489-491.
- contrasted with Montesquieu, ii. 498.
- disliked by Vico, ii. 503.
- contrasted with Leibnitz, ii. 505. (See *Leibnitz.*)

Locke, criticised by Leibnitz, ii. 506, 508-509, 516.
  indifference of Wolff towards, ii. 518.
  his position among foreigners, ii. 523.
  his relation to Bacon and to theology, ii. 524-526.
  supported by clergymen, ii. 526.
  why he held his ground, ii. 527.
  disliked by Johnson, ii. 527.
  his attraction for Voltaire, ii. 531.
  Condillac's opinion of, ii. 536, 537.
  made use of by Helvetius, ii. 539.
  opposition to the old system, ii. 541.
  use made of his dogmas by priests, ii. 542.
  his ideas on education contrasted with Rousseau's, ii. 543.
  on government, ii. 553.
  criticised by Rousseau, ii. 553, 554.
  his security against sentiment, ii. 558.
  Hume's contempt for, ii. 562-567.
  Voltaire's use of, ii. 563.
  preferred by Hume to Descartes and Malebranche, ii. 576.
  a point of likeness with Hume, ii. 581.
  contrasted with Reid, ii. 584.
  attacked by Burke, ii. 593, 595.
  attacked by Paley, ii. 597.
  compared with Paley, ii. 598.
  compared with Kant, ii. 620, 621, 624, 635.
  appealed to by Kant, ii. 627.
  likeness to Kant, ii. 653.
  his recognition of the supernatural, ii. 654.
Logic, what it can do, Preface, xxxiv.
  its invention by Zeno, i. 113.
  of Aristotle, i. 217-218.
  tyranny of, denounced by Johannes Scotus, i. 483.
  by Luther (see *Luther*).
  of Gerbert, i. 505.
  denounced by John of Salisbury, i. 582.
  of Hegel and Mill (see *Hegel*, *Mill*).
Logo-Sophia (see *Coleridge*).
Lorraine, Cardinal of (see *Ramus*).
Louis IX. contrasted with Philip the Fair, i. 674.
Louis XI. one of Bacon's three Magians, ii. 98.
Louis XIV., the age of, a casuistical one, ii. 364.
  his opposition to the Jansenists and the Protestants, ii. 483, 484.
Louis XIV., Voltaire's admiration for, ii. 564.
Lorenzo de Medici, appeal of Ficinus, to, ii. 60-62.
  effect of Ficinus on, ii. 72.
  founds the Florentine Academy, ii. 73.
  the victim of flattery, ii. 74-75.
  his disputes with Politian, ii. 79-80.
  relations to Savonarola, ii. 84-85.
Loyola, Ignatius, the opponent of Calvin rather than of Luther, ii. 134, 135.
  attitude as a Genevan (see *Geneva*).
  difference between Calvin and Loyola, ii. 136.
  his maxim contrasted with the maxims of the Church and of Luther (see *Jesuits*).
  confusions which he introduced, i. 137-138.
Lully, Raymond, his claim to be considered a martyr, i. 661.
  protected by Urban VIII., i. 661.
  effect of Majorca on him, i. 661.
  his early career, i. 662, 663.
  his expedition to the Saracens, and martyrdom, i. 664-666.
  the "*Ars Brevis*," i. 666-673. (See *Bruno*).
Lucan contrasted with Seneca, i. 267.
Lucian of Samosata, his satires on Pythagoras not a safe guide, i. 103, 313.
Lucretius, peculiarity of his poems, i. 248.
  influence of his age on him, i. 249.
  his relations to Democritus and Epicurus, i. 250.
"*Lun-yu*," book of Khoung-fou-tseu's discourses (see *Khoung-fou-tseu*).
Luther, compared with Godeschalcus, i. 462-463.
  Augustine's relation to, i. 463.
  feeling towards Scholastics, i. 624.
  his sayings about "words," ii. 107, 110.
  his acquaintance with Melancthon, ii. 110-111.
  his opinions of Reuchlin, Erasmus, and Augustin, ii. 111.
  becomes a theologian in the convent, ii. 111.
  effect on him of Cicero, Plato, ii. 111-112.
  of Augustin, ii. 111, 112. (See *Augustin.*)

Luther, denounces Aristotle, ii. 112-114.
his ideas about freedom of the conscience, ii. 114-115.
contrasted with Augustine, ii. 115.
his admiration for Tauler, ii. 115.
his contest with Leo X., ii. 116.
the Wittenberg theses, ii. 117-118.
contrasted with Savonarola, ii. 118.
his influence on society, ii. 118-119.
his opposition to Henry VIII., ii. 119.
to the Humanists, ii. 119.
becomes Germanized with the Bible (see *Germany*).
his use of printing, ii. 120.
cannot help the peasants, ii. 120-121.
his view of the Anabaptists, ii. 121.
his likeness to them, ii. 121.
influence on morals, ii. 121, 122.
his dislike to psychology, ii. 122, 123.
attitude towards ontology, ii. 123, 124.
towards science and logic, ii. 124, 125.
respected by Cornelius Agrippa, ii. 126.
contrasted with Paracelsus, ii. 131.
opposition to all the men of his time, ii. 131.
opposition to the Schoolmen, ii. 132.
his death, ii. 133.
contrasted with Melancthon and Calvin, ii. 131, 132, 134-135.
with Loyola, ii. 137.
his insurrection on behalf of spiritual against intellectual world, ii. 215.
his feeling about sin, ii. 340.
the pain of being a thinker, ii. 422.
why he forsook Aristotle and Aquinas, ii. 436.
contrasted with his followers in the eighteenth century, ii. 615.
Lycurgus, difficulty of making out his existence, i. 74.
his legislation compared with Solon's, and contrasted with the Persian, i. 85.
appealed to by Agrippa, ii. 128.
Lysis, a later Pythagorean, i. 108.

Macaulay, his opinion of Seneca, i. 267.
of Cranmer's work, ii. 138.
Machiavelli, his fine, ii. 96.
reasons for studying Borgia, ii. 96-97.
Machiavelli, the "*Principe*," ii. 97.
its effect in Italy, France, and Spain, and failure in England, ii. 97-98.
contrasted with More, ii. 99-100.
dangers of, to Bacon, ii. 202.
Mackintosh, his admiration for Berkeley's style, ii. 458.
his bitterness against Helvetius, ii. 539-540.
Magians, their conflict with Zerduscht, i. 75.
their worship of Ahriman, i. 75.
their astrology, i. 76.
opposed officially to the king, i. 79.
their conspiracies, i. 80.
sympathy with their pursuits attributed to Anaxagoras, i. 102.
their science studied by Plotinus, i. 317.
"the three."
(See *Henry* VII., *Louis* XI., *Ferdinand*. See also *Mahometans*).
Mahomet, his proclamation, i. 452.
restores Greek faith, i. 452, 453.
his influence on Constantinople, i. 453.
on philosophy, i. 453.
compared with Gregory the great, i. 453, 454.
effect on England, i. 458.
Mahomet II. patronizes Gennadius, ii. 64.
Mahometans, Charlemagne's victory over, i. 459.
their use in Spain, i. 503.
effect of metaphysics on, in the thirteenth century, i. 590.
likeness to the old Magians, i. 591.
acquaintance with Greek, i. 592.
neglect the Koran for Aristotle, i. 592 (see *Averroes*, *Arrian*).
difference between them and Christians as to discussions on the soul, i. 602.
Lully's expedition to (see *Lully*).
Mahometanism, its struggle with Christianity, ii. 1-3.
Maimonides criticized by Spinoza, ii. 407.
Mainwaring, his doctrines despised by Clarendon, ii. 337.
Majorca, its effect on Lully (see *Lully*).
Malebranche, Voltaire's attitude towards, ii. 351.
his relation to Descartes, ii. 351-352.
his birth and education, ii. 352.

Malebranche, the "*Récherche de la Verité*," ii. 353.
  influence of Descartes on him, ii. 353.
  "*Entretiens sur la Metaphysique*," ii. 353-364.
  compared to Locke, ii. 355.
  Berkeley's interview with (see *Berkeley*).
  a witness against casuistry, ii. 365.
  his contest with Arnauld (see *Arnauld*).
  grounds of his difference from Arnauld, ii. 369, 370.
  compared to Bossuet, ii. 371.
  how far a Rationalist, ii. 371, 372.
  his prayer in the "*Méditations Chrétiennes*, ii. 372.
  his opinion of Spinoza, ii. 372.
  reason for that opinion, ii. 377.
  a decree enforced against, ii. 484.
  relations with Andrè, ii. 485.
  Andrè's affection for, ii. 486.
  sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 490.
Mandeville, his view of the world, ii. 455.
Manicheans, book of Augustin on, i. 376.
  conflicts of Augustin with, i. 463.
  attacked by Duns Scotus, i. 647.
  Luther's objection to, ii. 112.
Mansel, controversy with, Preface, xlii. (note).
Mariana, contrasted with Bellarmin, ii. 153.
  his sanction of tyrannicide, ii. 153, 154.
  reasons for preferring him to Bellarmin, ii. 154.
  is converted from a Schoolman into a man, ii. 157-158.
  "*De Rege et Regis Institutione*," ii. 158-161.
  failure of his hopes, ii. 161.
Mathematics, influence on Anaximander, i. 103-104.
  on Pythagoras, i. 104.
  ideas of Plato and Aristotle on, contrasted, i. 189.
  John of Salisbury's view of, i. 578.
  Bacon's use of, ii. 224.
Maximilian, his treatment of the Jews, ii. 105.
Maximus, Julian's admiration for, i. 353.
  Greek divine, translated by Johannes Scotus, i. 472
Mean, Aristotle's doctrine of, i. 222.
Meaux, M. de, Fenelon's contest with, ii. 370.
Medians contrasted with the Persians, i. 79.
Medici, their influence on Florence, ii. 94 (see *Cosmo* de Medici, *Lorenzo* de Medici).
Medism, Anaxagoras accused of, i. 102.
Megarian School (see *Aristippus*, *Euclides*, *Eubulides*, *Plato*).
Memorabilia (see *Socrates*, *Xenophon*).
Melancthon, his view of Scholastic controversies, i. 624.
  Reuchlin's advice to, ii. 110.
  relations to Luther, ii. 111.
  his restoration of Aristotle, ii. 114.
  respected by Agrippa, ii. 126.
  at heart a Schoolman, ii. 132.
Mendelssohn, his relations with Lessing, ii. 645-648.
  his character and feelings, ii. 645.
  his relations with Jacobi, ii. 648-651.
Mendicant Orders (see *Dominicans*, *Franciscans*).
Meng-tseu, his dialogues and maxims, i. 69-72.
  his account of Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 72.
  difference from Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 73.
Mercury, reverence of Proclus for, i. 389.
Mersenne, his friendship for Hobbes, ii. 236, 237.
  his attack on Atheists, ii. 236.
  tries to administer the Sacraments to Hobbes, ii. 237.
Metaphysics concerned with something else than the objects round one, Introduction, xliii.
  enquiries into, contrasted with moral enquiries, Introduction, xliv.
  meaning of the word, as used by Aristotle, i. 197 (see *Philosophy*, *Ontology*).
Metaphysician of the ninth century, Johannes Scotus, i. 467.
Metempsychosis (see *Pythagoras*).
Methodist movement, ii. 667.
  its effects, ii. 668 (see also *Butler*, *Wesley*, *Whitfield*).
Michael Angelo, effect of Florentine Platonism on, ii. 72.
Michelet, his remarks about Godeschalcus, i. 462.

Michelet, his criticisms on Spinosa, ii. 414, 416, 417.
Mill, are we to follow his logic, Preface, xxxiv.
  his recognition of the effect produced by Coleridge, ii. 665, 666-671.
  effect of the Benthamite training on him, ii. 672.
  shown in his book on logic, ii. 672.
  difference between him and the other men of that school, ii. 672.
Military Orders (see *Templars*).
Milman, his complaint of the "*Imitatio Christi*," ii. 46.
Milton, his scheme of education compared to that of Ramus, ii. 147.
  letter to Mr. Hartlib (see *Hartlib*).
  the character of his writings, ii. 211.
  feelings of Puritans and Royalists towards him, ii. 341.
  moral of "Paradise Lost," ii. 341.
  charge of Arianism against him, ii. 341.
  habit of looking at the fall of Adam as the centre of the universal history, how it affected him, ii. 341, 342.
  his Arianism, ii. 342.
  compared to South, ii. 342.
Molesworth, his translation of Hobbes, ii. 240.
  dedicates it to Grote, ii. 241.
Monasteries, their introduction into England, i. 456.
  their effect in the early half of the twelfth century, i. 534-536.
  contrast between the idea of them in the time of Bernard and in that of Anselm's, i. 537.
Monnica, Augustin's feeling about her, i. 374.
Monothelite controversy, its importance, i. 451.
Montaigne, reasons for speaking of him, ii. 149, 150.
  his character, ii. 150.
  his influence in England, ii. 150.
  his apology for Raimond de Sebonde, ii. 151, 152.
Montesquieu, his introduction to London, ii. 495.
  the "*Lettres Persannes*," ii. 495, 496.
  the "*Esprit des Lois*," ii. 496-500.
  his effect on Pitt and England, ii. 496, 497.
  contrasted with Locke, ii. 498.
Montesquieu, his relations with Queen Caroline, ii. 523.
  Rousseau's sympathy with, ii. 552.
Moral obligation (Cicero's feeling of), i. 253.
  philosophy, what it means, Introduction, xliv.
Moralist, Johannes Scotus less a moralist than a metaphysician (see *Metaphysician*).
  John Huss, a moralist rather than a Mystic, ii. 35.
Morbeka, his translation of the treatises of Proclus, i. 389.
More (Sir Thomas), his testimony against Machiavelli, ii. 98, 99.
  the "Utopia" (1st book), ii. 99, 100.
  his character, ii. 100.
  contrasted with Erasmus, ii. 100, 101.
More (Henry), his idea of Platonism, ii. 348.
  the "Mystery of Godliness," ii. 348, 349.
  contrasted with Cudworth, ii. 349.
Mortrera, teaches Spinoza, ii. 373.
  his denunciation of Spinoza, ii. 374.
Moses, his birth and education, i. 9.
  his proclamation to the Jews, i. 11.
  a prophet, i. 26.
  theory of Josephus about, i. 32.
  vindicates a moral order, i. 33.
  compared to Plato by Numenius, i. 301, 302.
  his account of the creation contrasted with that of South (see *South*).
Mosheim, his translation of Cudworth, ii. 346.
  his ecclesiastical history (see *Baronius*).
Mysticism essential part of Brahminism and Buddhism, but despised by the Chinese, i. 54.
  of Hugo de St. Victoire, i. 565.
  of the Germans (see *Eckart*, *Tauler*, *Suso*).
  of Hobbes, ii. 277.

Napoleon, triumphs of, in Germany, ii. 520.
  his scorn of philosophers, ii. 661.
Navigius, brother of Augustin, i. 374.
Neander, his remark about Nicolas of Basle, ii. 26.
Neo-Platonism, its debt to the courtiers of Gallienus, i. 328.
  (See *Plotinus*, *Porphyry*.)

Neo-Platonism of Constantine, i. 344.
  in the fifth century, i. 377.
  Johannes Scotus' relation to, i. 473, 474.
Nero patronizes Seneca, i. 266.
  flattered by Lucan, i. 267.
  contrasted with Augustus by Seneca, i. 270, 271.
  Epictetus's feeling towards, i. 272.
  Seneca's idea of, i. 274.
Nerva, age of, i. 280.
Nestorius, his heresy, i. 377.
Neuber, Madame (see *Lessing*).
Newton, doctrine of, i. xxiv.-xxv.
  his disputes with Leibnitz (see *Leibnitz*).
  theory of Leibnitz about, ii. 516.
  his effect on natural science, ii. 525.
Nicolas of Basle, a Waldensian martyr, ii. 26.
Nicolas or Nicolaus of Cusa, brought into notice by the Council of Basle, ii. 49.
  his birth and education, ii. 49.
  belongs to the "Brothers of the Common Life," ii. 49, 50.
  their effect on him, ii. 50.
  his work at the Council of Basle, ii. 50, 51.
  his calamities, ii. 51, 52.
  patronized by Pius II., ii. 52.
  his position in history, ii. 52.
  "*De Doctâ Ignorantiâ*," ii. 52-57.
  contrasted with Gerson, ii. 57.
  "*De Pace Fidei*," ii. 58.
  "*De Venatione Sapientiæ*," ii. 58, 59.
  ends the age of councils, ii. 59.
  his "ignorance," ii. 673.
Nicolaus of Pax, biographer of Lully, i. 665.
Nicolas III. suceeeds Clement IV., i. 660.
Nicolas V. contrasted with Gregory I., i. 411.
  his patronage of Nicolaus of Cusa, ii. 51.
  effect which such a Pope might have, ii. 119.
Nicole of Clamenge, a man of great purpose, ii. 39.
Nogaret, his struggle with Boniface, i. 12
Nominalists' controversy with the Realists, i. 553, 554.
  Abelard chooses another name for the controversy, i. 553.
  use of the words, i. 554.
Nominalists' doctrine embodied in a new form by Abelard, i. 558.
  these controversies attacked by John of Salisbury, i. 582.
  difference between the earlier and later Nominalists, ii. 7.
  Occam's Nominalism (see *Occam*).
  of Paris in the fifteenth century, ii. 38.
Normandy, the intellectual centre of Europe in the eleventh century, i. 506-507.
  trains Lanfranc, i. 507-508.
Normandy (William of), his relations to Lanfranc, i. 510.
  contrasted with Rufus, i. 517.
Nous (see *Anaxagoras*).
Numenius, a Pythagorean in the second century, his ideas about Moses and Plato (see *Moses*).
  his book about the "Good," i. 302, 303.
  the secret discipline, i. 303, 304.
  his history of the Platonic school, i. 304.

Occam (William of), compared with Duns Scotus, ii. 6.
  interest in politics, ii. 6.
  change which he finds in the position of Nominalism (see *Nominalists*).
  both a logician and a theologian, ii. 7, 8.
  struggle with John XXII., ii. 10, 11.
  his dialogue, ii. 11-14.
  his attitude towards the canonists, ii. 13.
  his Eight Questions, ii. 14.
  how a defender of priests, ii. 15.
  his effect, ii. 16, 17.
  compared with the German reformers, ii. 17.
  his use of college disputation, ii. 17, 18.
  compared to Wycliffe, ii. 30.
  his services to philosophy, ii. 30.
Odin, difficulty of discovering his existence, i. 74.
Odysseus, the type of Greek character, i. 84.
  not found in Roman history, i. 245.
Odyssey, contrasted with Œdipus Tyrannus, i. 117.
Œcolampadius brings Paracelsus to the University of Basle, ii. 129.
Olympius, an Alexandrian, has contempt for Plotinus, i. 329.

Olympus, the assemblies in, i. 83.
Om (name of), its importance to the Brahmins, i. 39.
Ommyiades, a Mahometan sect, i. 459.
Ontology, bearings of, on Aristotle's politics, i. 230.
  of the Stoics, i. 241.
  of Plotinus, i. 320.
  of Albertus Magnus, i. 605.
  effect of the reformation on, ii. 123.
  Bacon's attitude towards, ii. 222-224.
  of Aristotle, ii. 435.
  treatment of, by Locke, ii. 445.
  Wolff's treatment of, ii. 518.
  in France in this century, ii. 662.
Orange, William of, *the Silent*, attraction of Calvinism for him, ii. 144.
Orange, William of (III. of England), how he was formed, ii. 324.
Origen, his biography contrasted with that of Clemens, i. 307.
  Porphyry's charge against, i. 317.
  Justinian's anathemas on, i. 406.
  Guizot's blunder about, i. 470.
Ormuzd, nominally reverenced by the Magians, i. 75.
  gives way to Ahriman, i. 75.
  worshipped by Zerduscht, i. 76, 77.
  invisible world alone left him by the later philosophy, i. 77.
  need of other modes of declaring him, i. 79.
  contrasted with Zeus, i. 82 (see too *Cyrus*, *Darius*).
Osiris, his place in Egyptian theology, i. 340.
Ostrogoths, the struggle against, a fight against Arianism, i. 404.
Ottoman race, its difference from earlier races, ii. 2.
  its ascendancy in fourteenth century, ii. 2.

Padilla (Mariana's thoughts of), ii. 157.
Paine (Thomas), Burke's attitude towards, ii. 595.
Palatine (Princess), friend of Descartes, ii. 293, 294.
Paley, his denial of a conscience, Preface, xxxiv. xxxv.
  his doctrine of expediency, ii. 596.
  his attitude towards Hume, ii. 596, 597.
  his political philosophy, ii. 597, 598.
  his simplicity and subtlety, ii. 598, 599.
Paley, "The Evidences of Christianity," ii. 599.
  the "Moral and Political Philosophy," ii. 599.
  his conflict with Hume, ii. 599, 600.
  effect of Gibbon on Paley's followers, ii. 600.
  the "Natural Theology," ii. 601.
  conclusion from his works, ii. 602.
  Bentham's doctrine like his, ii. 604.
  compared with Bentham, ii. 602, 605.
  Kant's opposition to, ii. 630-631, 634.
  contrasted with Kant, ii. 634.
Pandoos, Arjoon of the sect of, i. 41.
Pantænus, first teacher of the Alexandrian school, i. 307.
Pantheism of the Hindoos, i. 39.
  of Marcus Aurelius, i. 297.
  of Johannes Scotus, i. 482; ii. 21.
  of Spinoza (see *Spinoza*).
Papacy, effect of Gregory upon it, i. 417.
  its history, i. 417.
  checked by the emperor, i. 459.
  relation of Europe to, *the* question of the tenth century, i. 506, 507.
  the champion of freedom against German despotism, i. 571.
  its weakness, i. 571.
  less important in the thirteenth century than the Mendicant Orders, i. 586..
  Occam's attitude towards, ii. 9.
  effect on Savonarola, ii. 90.
  feelings of Luther and Henry VIII. about, ii. 119.
  demands in time of Innocent IV. (See *Innocent* IV.)
  Occam's attacks on (see *Occam*).
  attitude of Huss towards (see *Huss*).
Paracelsus, his early training, ii. 129.
  compared with Roger Bacon, ii. 129, 130.
  the inconsistencies and moral of his life, ii. 130, 131.
  his feelings about alchemy and astrology, ii. 131.
  not a representative man, ii. 131.
Paris, Julian's affection for, i. 356.
  the first bishop of, said to be Dionysius the Areopagite, i. 472.
  Abelard's contests at (see *Abelard*).
  University of, its needs, i. 577.
  the age of, i. 577, 578.
  the battle-field between the Mendicant Orders and the new philosophy, i. 587.

Paris, state of, in latter half of the tenth century, i. 607-609.
  connection of Duns Scotus with, i. 646.
  Roger Bacon studies at, i. 656.
  Lully desires to go to, i. 662.
  its work in the fifteenth century, ii. 38.
  Descartes at, ii. 291-293.
  preachers of, in seventeenth century, ii. 345.
  Voltaire's influence in, ii. 492.
  his last visit to, ii. 530.
Parmenides, takes up the enquiries of Xenophanes, i. 110.
  difference of, from Xenophanes, i. 110, 111.
  his doctrine of the "One," i. 111.
  Zeno's defence of (see *Zeno* of Elea).
  how he became a metaphysician, i. 154.
  the "*Parmenides*" of Plato (see *Plato*, *Proclus*).
  followers of, their effect on science, i. 180.
  discourses on, by Proclus, i. 386.
Pascal, the *Lettres Provinciales*, ii. 364, 365.
  compared with Malebranche, ii. 365.
  his Jansenism, ii. 365.
  the champion of the Port-Royal Society, ii. 366.
  quoted by Jacobi, ii. 649.
  alluded to by Hume, ii. 571.
Paschasius Radbertus, his controversy about the Sacraments, i. 462.
  cause of the popularity of his doctrine, i. 464.
  better illustration of the theological element in philosophy than Hincmar, i. 468.
Pater-noster, use of, Preface, xvii. xviii. xxviii.
Paul (Father), his influence on Bruno's fate, ii. 186.
Paul (St.), change in his creed, Preface, xxxii.
  his effect on philosophy, i. 259, 260.
  likeness of his language to that of Marcus Aurelius, i. 298.
  difference of Erasmus and Luther as to, ii. 111.
  the guide of Hooker, ii. 193, 197.
  appealed to by Hobbes, ii. 241.
  contrasted with Hobbes, ii. 253.
  quoted by Descartes, ii. 314.
  cause of Luther's attraction for, ii. 436.
Pauthier, his translation of Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 56, 57.
  his apology for a phrase in his tranlation, i. 63.
Pausanias, his assumption of the Persian dress, i. 85.
Pearson compared with Hobbes, i. 574.
Peasants' war, ii. 120, 121.
Pelagius, only partially a champion of spiritual freedom, i. 455.
Peloponnesian war, the thoughts which it suggested, i. 118.
Periander belongs to region of fact, i. 87.
Pericles, relation of, to Anaxagoras, i. 101, 102.
  understood the Athenians, i. 114.
  the age of, i. 114, 115, 117
  Hobbes' view of, ii. 250.
Perrens, his evidence about Savonarola. ii. 91 (note).
Persia, movement in, of theological reform (see *Zerduscht*).
  worship of, in time of Herodotus, i. 77.
  represents the royal as opposed to the priestly rule, i. 79.
  tendency in, to Light-worship, i. 80, 81-83.
  the representative of Asia in Herodotus's history, i. 82.
  their theology contrasted with that of the Greeks (see *Ormuzd*).
  character contrasted with the Spartan and Athenian, i. 85.
Peter the Lombard, his training, i. 572.
  contrasted with Hugo St. Victoire, i. 572, 573.
  his book of sentences, i. 572-576.
  merits, i. 574.
  influence of Augustine on, i. 574.
  dangers of, i. 576.
  compensation for them, i. 577.
  belongs to the university age, i. 578.
Petit (Jean), his defence of the murder of the Duke of Orleans, ii. 39.
  Gerson's condemnation of, ii. 39, 49.
Petrarch, Lorenzo de Medici preferred to, by Ficinus, ii. 75.
Pfefferkorn, his hostility to Reuchlin, ii. 105, 106.
Pharisees, the sect of, i. 277.
Philip II., the grand idea of his life, ii. 161.
Philip III., Mariana's lesson to, ii 161.

Philip of Macedon, the beginner of a new epoch, i. 177.
Philo, his character, i. 257.
his philosophy, i. 257, 258.
his merits, i. 258.
his deficiencies, i. 259.
compared with Seneca, i. 276.
Philolaus, a later Pythagorean, i. 108.
Philoponus, charges against him, ii. 64.
Philosopher (name of), to whom confined, Introduction, xlv.
attributed first to Pythagoras, i. 103.
use of the name by Socrates, i. 103, 130.
duty of, Seneca's view of (see *Seneca*).
how related to the prophet, i. 26.
duty of, to the multitude, i. 168.
the science of, i. 203.
use of name by Philo, i. 257.
described by Plotinus, i. 322.
Philosophy, meaning of, Introduction, xliii.
physical, xliii.
metaphysical, xliii.
moral, xliv.
chronological divisions of, xlvi.
recognition of, by the Hebrew Scriptures, i. 5. (See *Hebrew*, *Job*.)
influence of Egypt, Phœnicia, and Assyria on, i. 32.
of the Hindoos (see *Hindoo*, *Buddhist*, *Brahmin*).
its appearance in Asia earlier than in Europe, i. 53.
in China, philosophy a history, i. 54.
Persian, &c. (see *Persia*, *Magian*, *Ormuzd*, *Zerduscht*.)
specially characteristic of Greece, i. 81.
the beginning of, i. 87, 88.
Thales begins, i. 91.
connection of, with poetry, i. 108.
(summary of), in the Republic, i. 173.
of the age of Pericles, its objects, i. 177.
effects on, of St. Paul and St. John (see *Paul*, St., *John*, St.)
of the old world, i. 263.
of Seneca (see *Seneca*).
what it is concerned with, i. 309, 310.
where it came from and how (according to Clemens), i. 312.
connection of Arian controversy with, i. 346-347.
Philosophy, relation of events in fifth century to, i. 377.
opposition of Arians to, i. 415.
new impulse towards, i. 416.
definition of by Boethius, i. 431.
appears to Boethius as a woman, i. 439.
her relation to theology (see *Theology*).
obligation of, to Mahomet, i. 453.
absence of, in the tenth century, i. 502.
division of, by Bonaventura, i. 640.
visits Raymond Lully, i. 673.
character of, in the first thirteen centuries, *Preface to vol.* ii. ix.
effect on, of the struggle of Mahometanism and Christianity, ii. 1-3.
controversies of, from the thirteenth century to our own, ii. 3.
revival of, in the fifteenth century, ii. 62.
(See *Ficinus*, *Vico*, *Lorenzo* de Medici.)
attitude of Bacon towards, ii. 214.
the object of, according to Hobbes, ii. 243.
of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as important as those of preceding centuries, ii. 433.
the ancient, Voltaire's view of, ii. 489.
opinion of Vico of (see *Vico*).
connection in Germany with art and philology in eighteenth century, ii. 638.
later manifestation of (see *England*, *France*, *Germany*, *India*, *Hebrew*).
Philostratus, his account of Apollonius of Tyana, i. 275.
Phœnicia did not produce any philosophers, i. 32.
why it did not, i. 34, 35.
its intercourse with Judea, i. 35.
Pico di Mirandula, Ficinus's account of him, ii. 60-62.
affection of Ficinus for him, ii. 66.
his honesty of conviction, ii. 69.
his life, ii. 75-78.
effects of his conversion on him, ii. 78.
relations to Savonarola, ii. 79.
his treatises on "Being and Unity," ii. 79-82.
his answers to objectors, ii. 83.
contrasted with Savonarola, ii. 33, 34.

P*ico* di Mirandula, helps to explain the influence of the Medici on Florence, ii. 94.
P*ierre* d'Ailly, effect of his nominalism, i. 38.
  his power of self-sacrifice, i. 39.
P*ietists* (see *Francke*).
P*isistratus*, age of, morally inferior to that of Pericles, i. 117.
P*itt* uses Montesquieu's words as a watchword in his movements for reform, ii. 497.
  his attitude in the early days of the French revolution, ii. 592.
Pittacus, one of the seven wise men, i. 87.
P*ius* II. (see *Nicolas* of Cusa).
Pius IV. patronizes Telesio, ii. 163.
Plato, how he exhibits Socrates to us, Preface, xix.
  necessity of studying the earlier philosophers before studying him, i. 114.
  his use of the word "Sophist," i. 116, 117.
  Socrates' dream about him, i. 138.
  his early writings, i. 139.
  influence of Socrates on him, i. 139.
  his connection with Dion and Dionysius, i. 139.
  relation to the Socratic schools, i. 140.
  his explanation of Socrates' avoidance of theories, i. 140.
  why he wrote Dialogues, i. 141-142, their character, i. 142-143.
  his supposed Eclecticism, i. 143.
  his love of moral distinctions, i. 143-144.
  the Socratic Dialogues, i. 145-146.
  the Dialogues which refer to the old philosophers, i. 146-147.
  his study of the Heracliteans and the Eleatics, i. 148.
  of Protagoras, Xenophanes, and Parmenides, i. 149.
  not a theorist, i. 150-151.
  his dialectics and ethics, i. 151-152.
  the "*Phædrus*," i. 152.
  the "*Gorgias*," i. 152-153.
  the "*Theætetus*," i. 153.
  third class of dialogues, i. 153-155.
  the "*Parmenides*," i. 155.
  the "*Sophist*," i. 155-156.
  the Dialectics (see *Dialectics*).
  connected with politics, i. 158.
  the "Republic," i. 158-171.
P*lato*, "Republic" contrasted with the "Laws," i. 166.
  the close of it contrasted with the "*Phædo*," i. 171-172.
  his use of fables (see *Fables*).
  his relation to Pythagoras, i. 173.
  the "*Timæus*," i. 173-176.
  Bacon's criticism on, i. 178.
  date of his death, i. 176.
  his discovery of Aristotle's worth, i. 177-178.
  succeeded by Speusippus, i. 178.
  contrasted with Aristotle, i. 179-185, 187.
  criticism of Aristotle on him, i. 181, 182.
  reason of dissatisfaction of his pupils, i. 182, 183.
  Dialectics of, contrasted with those of Aristotle (see *Dialectics*).
  Mathematics contrasted in same way (see *Mathematics*).
  Metaphysics similarly contrasted, i. 207, 216, 218.
  difference from Aristotle about arrival at certain conclusions, i. 233.
  Zeno of Cittium's opposition to (see *Zeno*).
  contrasted with that of the Stoics, i. 242.
  the academy founded to follow him misunderstands him, i. 243-244.
  result of this misunderstanding, i. 244-245.
  Philo's inability to solve his difficulties, i. 258.
  his tendency to believe in an Atlantis, i. 264.
  Justin's feelings towards, i. 292.
  Numenius's theory about, i. 301-302.
  admiration of Clemens for, i. 308.
  likeness of Plotinus to, i. 324.
  doctrine of, characteristic of the third century, i. 330.
  assumption of Iamblichus as to, i. 333.
  reason why Augustin resorted to, i. 358.
  Augustin's regret of his reverence for him, i. 372.
  lectures of Proclus on (see *Proclus*).
  how far his followers in the time of Proclus understood him, i. 393, 394.
  fall of his doctrines no cause for regret, i. 398-399.
  succeeded by Aristotle, i. 399-400.
  Triad of (see Pr*oclus*).

Plato, principles of the "*Gorgias*" reasserted by Boethius, i. 444.
  agreement of Johannes Scotus with him in his view of man, i. 488.
  differences of the Platonism of the first, ninth, and third centuries, i. 490.
  views of Ficinus about, ii. 60-62.
  revival of the study of him in Florence, ii. 63-67.
  reasons for the admiration of him in Florence, ii. 67-68.
  difference between him and Plotinus, ii. 68.
  effects of the revival of this study, ii. 72-73.
  ideas of Pico de Mirandula about, ii. 81.
  differences between him and Aristotle, ii. 81-82.
  feelings of Erasmus towards, ii. 102.
  Bacon's view of him, ii. 223.
  studied by Cudworth, More, &c. (see *Cudworth*, *More* (Henry), *Smith*).
  denounced by Locke, ii. 435.
  sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
  affection of Vico for him, ii. 503.
  Kant's attitude towards, ii. 630-631.
  likeness of his times to the present times, ii. 656.
  feelings of Schleiermacher towards, ii. 657.
Plautus, Luther's study of him, ii. 111.
Pletho, Cosmo's admiration for, i. 63.
  his life, i. 63-64.
  his controversy with Gennadius, i. 64.
  defends Plato's orthodoxy, i. 64.
  his enthusiasm increased by Italian friends, i. 65.
  his advantage over Gennadius, i. 65-66.
  difference of, from Ficinus, i. 66.
  effect of his lectures on Ficinus, i. 68.
  his knowledge of the character of some of Plato's supporters, i. 68-69.
Plotinus, influence of Ammonius on him, i. 317.
  his career, i. 317.
  his disciples, i. 317.
  a converser rather than a writer, i. 318.
  his object, i. 318-319.
  how different from that of Socrates, i. 319.
  the "*Enneads*," i. 319-323.
  Dialectics, i. 321.
Plotinus, relation of, to the Christians i. 323-324.
  training which he recommends, i. 324-325.
  theory of evil, i. 325.
  his dislike to the Gnostics, i. 325 326.
  his theology, i. 327.
  his Platonopolis, i. 327-328.
  his feeling towards Plato, i. 328-329.
  his enemies, i. 329.
  feeling of Porphyry towards him, i. 329-330.
  likeness of Proclus to him, i. 396.
  want of sympathy of Johannes Scotus with him, i. 490-491.
  feeling of Ficinus about him, ii. 60-63.
  difference between Plotinus and Plato, ii. 68.
  our indifference to him, ii. 69.
  influence on Henry More, ii. 348.
Plutarch of Cheronæa, his understanding of his countrymen, i. 281.
  union of Greek and Roman qualities in him, i. 282.
  reason of his influence on modern Europeans, i. 282-283.
  his understanding of Socrates, i. 283.
  helps to overthrow the sects, i. 283-284.
  his "Dæmon of Socrates," i. 284, 285.
Politian, respect of Ficinus for him, ii. 62-63.
Politics, English, Preface, xxxv.
  Hebrew, i. 10-12.
  of Meng-tseu, i. 69-73.
  Persian, i. 79.
  of the Seven Sages, i. 88.
  of Heraclitus, i. 96.
  contempt for, of Anaxagoras, i. 101.
  interest of Pythagoras in, i. 102-103.
  power in, the object of the teaching of the Sophists, i. 119, 120 (note).
  connected by Plato with Dialectics (see *Plato*).
  of the "Republic" and the "Laws," (see *Plato*).
  of Aristotle (see *Aristotle*).
  of Rome, i. 245, 249.
  of Cato and Brutus, i. 251.
  of Cicero, i. 251.
  contempt for, of Seneca, i. 267.
  of Trajan, i. 285.
  of Marcus Aurelius, i. 297.
  of Proclus, i. 395.
  of Boethius, i. 400, 424-425.
  of the eleventh century, i. 507

Politics, of Lanfranc, i. 514.
  of Anselm, i. 518.
  of Bernard of Clairvaux, i. 535, 565.
  of Arnold of Brescia, i. 570-571.
  of Grosseteste and Bacon (see *Grosseteste* and *Bacon*).
  of Clement IV. (see *Clement* IV.)
  of the fourteenth century,. ii. 1, 2.
  of Huss, ii. 34-35.
  of Savonarola (see *Savonarola*).
  of Henry VIII., ii. 119.
  of the Anabaptists, ii. 120-121.
  of Mariana (see *Mariana*).
  connection of, with the Predestinarian controversy, ii. 208-209.
  of Hume, ii. 564-565.
  (See also *Johnson*, *Locke*, *Hobbes*, *Burke*, *Rousseau*).
Polycarp, explanation of his death, i. 298-299.
Polycrates, Pythagoras flies from his tyranny, i. 104.
Pompey, Lucan's admiration for, i. 267.
Pope, his description of Bolingbroke, ii. 452.
  the "Essay on Man," ii. 452-453.
Porphyry, his search for a brotherhood, i. 108.
  his relation to Plotinus, i. 317, 318.
  his arrangement of Plotinus's books, i. 319, 320.
  his account of Olympius, i. 329.
  his difficulties, i. 330-331.
  his letter to Anebon, i. 331-333.
  answer of Iamblicus (see *Iamblicus*).
  importance of the controversy, i. 341-343.
  alluded to by Ficinus, ii. 62.
  criticised by Ramus, ii. 147.
Port Royal (see *Pascal*, *Arnauld*, *André*, *Jansenists*).
Poseidon, Thales's reverence for him, i. 93.
  Plato's relation to him, i. 138.
Priestley, Coleridge's attachment to, ii. 668.
Priests (Hebrew), as bad as other people, i. 27.
  of Hindostan, i. 37.
  becoming philosophers, i. 39.
Price (Dr.), his sermon, ii. 592.
Priscian, one of the seven last philosophers, i. 409.
Proclus, Cousin's opinion of him, i. 378-379.
  "Commentary on the Alcibiades," i. 379-382.
  his idea of love, i. 381-384.
  his merits and defects, i. 384.
  his demonology, i. 384.
  Platonical Triad, i. 385, 407-408.
  discourses on the "*Parmenides*," i. 386, 387.
  his difficulties, i. 387.
  contrasted with Augustin, i. 388.
  three treatises, i. 388-392.
  concludes the Greek philosophy, i. 392.
  writes against the Mosaic account of the creation, i. 396.
  why he could not understand Moses, i. 396-397.
Prodicus, his "Choice of Hercules," i. 120 (note).
  a philologer, i. 125.
Prophet (see *Hebrew*).
Protagoras, a professor of statesmanship, i. 125.
  effect of, on the teaching of Heraclitus, i. 148.
  opinion attributed to him in the "*Theætetus*," i. 220.
Protestants, their feeling towards Gregory the Great, i. 413.
  their mission, ii. 422-423.
Proverbs, book of, its characteristics, i. 19-23.
Psalms, book of, its characteristics, i. 15-18.
  contrasted with the Proverbs, i. 19.
Psychology of Aristotle, i. 218-220.
  of Ignatius, i. 286.
  of Marcus Aurelius, i. 295-296.
  of Duns Scotus, i. 651.
  relation of the Reformation to, i. 122.
  of Bruno, ii. 177.
  of Hobbes, ii. 274, 276-285, 288.
  of Descartes, ii. 311, 313, 316.
  of Bunyan, ii. 351.
  of Butler, ii. 462-463.
  of Locke, ii. 445.
  of Paley, ii. 596.
  of Fichte (see *Fichte*).
Puritans, Hooker's contest with, ii. 190.
  Hobbes's dislike of them, ii. 289.
  their dislike of him, ii. 333.
  their protest against his doctrines, ii. 339.
  their dislike of Milton, ii. 341.
  Hume's dislike of, ii. 564.
  Burke's dislike of their language, ii. 593.

Pyrrho, the representative of the Sceptics, i. 234.
  his history, i. 234.
  his doctrines at the root of the Sects, i. 234, 235.
  Epicurus imitates, i. 235.
  protest against, of the Stoics, i. 238.
Pyramids (see *Egypt*, *Assyria*, and *Chaldea*).
Pythagoras, importance of the records about him, i. 102-103.
  use of the name philosopher (see *Philosopher*).
  nature of the inspiration in which he believed, i. 103.
  studies arithmetic and geometry, i. 103-104.
  his love of music, i. 104.
  his travels, i. 104-105.
  his metempsychosis, i. 105.
  results of his inquiry, i. 105-106.
  the Society which he established, i. 106-108.
  corruption of his doctrines in later times, i. 108.
  contrasted with Xenophanes, i. 109.
  how he was led to study society, i. 153.
  difference between his followers and those of Parmenides, i. 155.
  his use of numbers, how applied by Plato, i. 169.
  contrasted with Plato, i. 173.
  Aristotle's disputes with his followers, i. 205, 219.
  admiration of Apollonius of Tyana, i. 275.
  how distinguished from later teachers, i. 275.
  Justin's study of his doctrines, i. 292.
  Numenius a follower of, i. 301.
  allusions of Clemens to the doctrines of, i. 308.
  sources from which Iamblichus supposed him to have drawn his knowledge, i. 333.
  admiration of Hugo St. Victoire for, i. 568.
  Ficinus's feeling towards, ii. 61.
  Bruno's reverence for him, ii. 182.

Quakers, effect on them of the "*Imitatio Christi*," ii. 45.
  frighten More, ii. 348.
Quinctilian, his patriotism, i. 281.
  criticised by Ramus, ii. 143.
Rabanus Maurus, a better representative of the theological element in philosophy than Hincmar is, i. 468.
Rabbinical schools, their divisions of the Bible, i. 15.
Rabbis, their intercourse with Egyptian priests, i. 337.
  their treatment of Spinoza, ii. 374.
Rabelais, philosophy of, ii. 149.
Raffaelle, effect on of the Florentine Platonists, ii. 72.
Raimond de Sebonde, apology for (see *Montaigne*).
  what Raimond held, ii. 151.
Rajagoon, works without gifts and faith, i. 47.
Ramus, his early life, ii. 141.
  his thesis at the University of Paris, ii. 141, 142.
  his reforms in the University, ii. 142.
  his two dangerous books, ii. 142-143.
  attacked by the Jesuits, ii. 143.
  his conversion, ii. 143-144.
  his later troubles, ii. 144.
  his commentary on the Bible, ii. 145.
  his refusal to go to Poland, ii. 145.
  his death, ii. 145.
  "*Animadversiones Aristotelicæ*," ii. 145-149.
Ravaillac, effect on, of Mariana's book, ii. 153-154.
Rawlinson, light thrown by him on Darius Hystaspes, i. 79.
Realists, controversy of, with the Nominalists, i. 553-554.
  Abelard's statement of their doctrines, i. 557.
  his other name for the controversy, i. 553, 557.
  give way to Nominalists, ii. 8.
  Huss and Wycliffe support them, ii. 35, 36.
  they speak in the vulgar idiom, ii. 37.
Reid, Thomas, his influence on France, ii. 580.
  Sir W. Hamilton's opinion of him, ii. 580.
  Ritter's opinion of him, ii. 581.
  contrasted with Hume, ii. 582, 583, 585.
    with Berkeley, ii. 584.
    with Burns, ii. 586.

Reimarus, his relations with Lessing, ii. 614.
his doctrines, ii. 614, 615. (See also "*Wolfenbüttel* Fragments.")
Religious truth, Preface, xli. xlii.
Religion, Hebrew history not a history of, i. 15.
Reuchlin, how far a Humanist, ii. 103-104.
his Hebrew studies, ii. 104.
his influence with Pico of Mirandula and the Jews, ii. 104, 105.
"The Causes of the Calamities of the Jews," ii. 105.
his quarrel wlth Pfefferkorn, ii. 105-107.
"*De Arte Cabalistica*," ii. 107.
"*De Verbo Mirifico*," ii. 107-110.
contrasted with Luther, ii. 110.
Luther's sympathy with him, ii. 111.
Rhapsodists, their influence on Pythagoras, i. 104.
Richter, Jean Paul, his intercourse with Herder, i. 641.
Rienzi, Boethius compared to, i. 400.
Ritter, his use of the words *Die Sophistik*, i. 120.
his controversy with Cousin on the authorship of the "*De Generibus et Speciebus*," i. 564 (note).
his view of Bacon's character, ii. 233-234.
of Reid and Wolff, ii. 581.
Rochefoucauld, his doctrine of self-interest, ii. 539, 559.
put out of sight by Hume, ii. 565.
Romanianus, Augustin's feeling about, i. 372.
Rome, theology of, i. 245.
heroes of, i. 245.
history of (see *Livy*).
origin of the philosophy of, i. 245-248.
character of its philosophy (see *Cicero*, *Lucretius*, *Cato*, and *Brutus*).
conquest of Egypt by, i. 255.
inability to develope a philosophy there, i. 255-256.
empire of, its effect on philosophy, i. 265, 266.
effect of, on Plutarch, i. 282.
empire of, its attitude towards Christianity, i. 285, 286, 298.
empire of, how affected by the Arian controversy, i. 346.
Constantinople stooping to, i. 402, 403.
Rome, influence of the traditions of, on Boethius, i. 423.
empire of, restored by Charlemagne, i. 458-459.
not the centre of the eleventh century, i. 505-507.
(See also *Papacy*, *Gregory* the Great, *Hildebrand*, and *Arnold* of Brescia.)
Romulus Augustulus, representative of the death of the empire, i. 402.
Roscellinus, Anselm's controversy with, i. 552.
compared with Abelard, i. 553.
Roscoe, his translation of Lorenzo's letter to his son, ii. 77.
Rose (Hugh James), Preface, xlii. (note).
Rousseau (Jean Jacques), his early training, ii. 542-543.
Emile, ii. 543-548.
contrasted with Montesquieu, ii. 548.
his puzzle about anthropomorphism, ii. 548-549.
the "Confessions," ii. 549-552 (see *Augustin*).
the "*Contrat Social*," ii. 552-557.
the "*Nouvelle Héloise*," ii. 558-559.
first in a series of educational reformers, ii. 559.
relations with Hume, ii. 559-560.
Rudolph II., a patron of Bruno, ii. 185.
Rufus (William), his contest with Anselm, i. 517.
Rusticiana, wife of Boethius, i. 424.
Rusticus, a cousin of Augustin, i. 374.
Rütli, the oath at, ii. 32.
Ruysbroeck (John of), criticised by Gerson, ii. 45.

Sabæan faith continues along with the later Assyrian worship, i. 35.
it is also found in China, i. 55.
Sadducees, their philosophy, i. 277.
Saisset, importance of his introduction to the translation of Spinoza, ii. 377-379.
Samuel, his office and message, i. 27.
Sandel pronounces an eulogy on Swedenborg, ii. 520.
San Severino, his influence over Bruno's fate, ii. 186.
Sanscrit, proof of modern inquiry about, i. 51.
Saturninus, the Syrian Gnostic at Antioch, i. 288-289.

Satwa-goon, action without the fruit of action, i. 47.
Savonarola, attachment of Pico de Mirandola to him, ii. 78, 79.
preaches Pico's funeral sermon, ii. 79.
reasons for this friendship, ii. 83-84.
his obedience to Dominican traditions, ii. 84.
his relation to Lorenzo de Medici, ii. 84-85.
how he came to take interest in politics, ii. 86.
his study of the prophets, ii. 87-88.
his government of Florence, ii. 85-90.
his errors, ii. 91.
his relations with Borgia, ii. 91-93.
his failure and death, ii. 93, 94.
explains influence of the Medici on Florence, ii. 94.
relations of Machiavelli to, ii. 96.
contrasted with Bruno, ii. 164 (note).
Scepticism (Greek), i. 233-234.
Schelling, his philosophy, ii. 655-656, 657.
Schiller, compared with Goethe, ii. 637.
Schlegel, his opinion of the Bhagavad-gita, i. 40.
Schleiermacher, his introduction to the "Republic," i. 159.
his attitude towards Hegel, ii. 657.
his theology, ii. 658, 659.
(See also *Spinoza*).
Schmidt, his criticism on Eckart, ii. 21.
School, name of, i. 93.
Schoolmen (see *Albertus*, *Aquinas*).
they give way to scholars, ii. 59.
Science of morality discovered by Socrates, compare i. 129 with i. 133.
unity in, aimed at by Parmenides and Socrates, i. 155.
of Dialectics (see *Dialectics* of Plato), i. 157.
Aristotle's view of, i. 190, 191.
Epicureans the enemies of, i. 238.
attitude of the Platonical school towards physical science, i. 408.
attitude of the Church towards physical science, i. 408.
inquiries of Albertus Magus into, i. 598, 599.
not affected by unbelief, ii. 127 (see also *Bacon*, Francis).
Scotland, its effect on Hume, ii. 564.
its relation to France, ii. 524, 580.
Secularism, its spread in England, i. 674.
Seneca, his birth, position, and philosophy, i. 266-268.
his letter to Gallio, i. 268-270.
his relations to Nero, i. 270-271.
contrasted with Epictetus, i. 271-272.
Sensation (see *Epicurus*, *Condillac*, *Locke*).
Shaftesbury, a pupil of Locke's, ii. 449.
contrasted with Locke, ii. 449, 450.
his letter on "Enthusiasm," ii. 450.
his philosophy of sunshine, ii. 450-451.
effect of Locke on him, ii. 451.
Shakspeare, how he was regarded in his time, i. 115.
the temper he has produced in us, i. 223.
has helped us to understand Plutarch, i. 282.
Romeo and Juliet (see *Bacon*, Roger).
effect of Catholicism and Calvinism on, ii. 139.
feelings of an English historian of philosophy towards him, ii. 149.
connection with Elizabethan age, ii. 198.
contrasted with Bacon, ii. 202.
contrasted with Fletcher and Jonson, ii. 210.
Sibthorpe, his doctrines despised by Clarendon, ii. 337.
Sickingen (Franz), his defence of Reuchlin, ii. 106.
Simon (Jules), his edition of Bossuet's treatises, ii. 371.
Simon, St. (see *St. Simon*).
Simonides, his idea of justice, i. 159-160.
Simplicius, one of the last seven wise men, i. 409.
a commentator on Aristotle. i. 193.
Siouan-wang, his conversations with Meng-tseu, i. 69.
Smith (Adam), "The Theory of Moral Sentiments" less important to philosophy than the "Wealth of Nations," ii. 578.
"The Wealth of Nations," ii. 578-579.
his attitude towards slavery, ii. 579.
his view of experience, ii. 579-580.
Smith (John), more of a preacher than the other Cambridge Platonists, ii. 349.
history of his school, ii. 349-350.

Socrates, how men like him appeared to the Athenians of his time, i. 115-116.
his relation to the Sophists, i. 116, 127, 129; ii. 435.
his character, i. 122, 123.
his work, i. 116-123.
his dæmon, i. 124, 284, 286, 384 (see *Plutarch*, *Ignatius*).
his feelings about the god at Delphi, i. 124-125.
his influence on Athenians, i. 125.
his dialogues, i. 125-126.
his elenchus and his irony, i. 127-128.
his feelings towards Alcibiades, i. 128-129.
his art, i. 129.
his doctrine about knowledge, i. 129-130.
the specimen of a philosopher, i. 130.
reason of his condemnation, i. 130-131.
his discourses on immortality, i. 131-132.
portrait of, by Aristophanes (see *Aristophanes*).
by Xenophon, i. 133-134.
by Plato, i. 134-135.
contrasted with Aristippus, i. 135-136.
relations of Euclides of Megara to, i. 137-138.
his dream (see *Plato*).
Plato's relation to, i. 139, 143, 150.
Plato's view of his character, i. 140-141.
contrasted with Xenophanes, i. 146.
object of his discipline, i. 147.
date of his birth, i. 176.
how he was led to study the soul, i. 180.
Aristotle's attitude towards, i. 181.
difference of Aristotle's conception of the "wise man" from that of Socrates, i. 199.
how Aristotle introduces him into the history of philosophy, i. 201.
contrasted with Pyrrho, i. 234.
and Zeno, i. 240.
contrasted with Plotinus, i. 318-319, 393.
Proclus's services to, i. 382, 383.
Proclus's debt to him, i. 388.
why valued by John of Salisbury, i. 580.
Socrates, feelings of Nicolaus of Cusa about, ii. 54-55, 67.
ignored by Ficinus, ii. 67.
and by Pletho, ii. 68.
and by More, ii. 348.
sneered at by Voltaire, ii. 489.
Schleiermacher's feeling towards, ii. 657.
his "ignorance" contrasted with that of Anytus, ii. 673.
Solomon, his studies, i. 20.
his writings (see *Proverbs*, *Wisdom*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Ecclesiasticus*).
Solon, likeness of his legislation to that of Lycurgus, i. 85.
one of the seven wise men, i. 87, 88.
time of, morally inferior to that of Pericles, i. 117.
Somers (Lord), his language about the right of William III. to the throne, ii. 593-594.
Sophists, the common opinion about them, i. 116.
Mr. Grote's view of them (see *Grote*).
Socrates' relation to (see *Socrates*).
definition of their work, i. 117, 120.
name may have been applied to poets and philosophers, i. 121.
denounced by Aristophanes, i. 121.
their aim contrasted with that of Socrates, i. 129-130.
Plato's opinion of, i. 148.
his use of the name, i. 156.
(See also *Socrates*, *Prodicus*, *Protagoras*.)
Sophocles, the feeling of his contemporaries towards him, i. 115.
quoted by Clemens, i. 308.
South, his sermon about Adam, ii. 342-344.
contrasted with Descartes, ii. 344.
Sparta contrasted with Athens and Persia, i. 85.
Spectator's Club (the), ii. 527.
the paper, influenced by Montaigne, ii. 150.
Spenser, effect of Calvinism and Catholicism on, ii. 139.
contrasted with Bacon, ii. 202.
Speusippus (see *Plato*).
Spinoza, need of wisdom in studying him, ii. 373.
his birth and training, ii. 373-374.
effect of Descartes on him, ii. 374.
his heresy and excommunication, ii. 374.
his subsequent life, ii. 374-375.

Spinoza, "*Principia Philosophiæ*," ii. 375.
his idea of "unity," ii. 376.
criticism of Malebranche on, ii. 377.
his geometry, ii. 378-379.
his definitions, ii. 379-380.
his doctrine of the "Love of God," ii. 380.
where he leaves Descartes, ii. 380-381.
the "*Cogitata Metaphysica*," ii. 381-390.
his Pantheism, ii. 390-391.
his Calvinism, ii. 391.
effect of his Jewish belief on him, ii. 391-392.
the "*Tractatus Theologico Politicus*," ii. 392-413.
contrasted with St. Paul, ii. 409.
with Hobbes, ii. 410.
the "*Ethica*," ii. 413-429.
results of his teaching, ii. 429-431.
his politics, ii. 431-432.
his confusion, ii. 431.
his assertion of Being, ii. 437.
his mistake about thinkers, ii. 438.
Locke's attitude to, ii. 442.
attacked by Bentley, ii. 478.
contrasted with Leibnitz, ii. 514.
Jacobi's study of, ii. 644-645.
Lessing's study of, ii. 645-646.
Jacobi's feelings towards, ii. 645, 646.
his influence on Schleiermacher, ii. 658.
his influence on Coleridge, ii. 668.
Sterry (Peter), a Mystic of the seventeenth century, ii. 350.
influence of Cromwell on, ii. 350.
his character and opinions, ii. 350-351.
contrasted with Bunyan, ii. 351.
Stillingfleet an exception to his class, ii. 526.
Stilpò the Megarian, i. 137.
Stoics (Greek), unlike the Roman, i. 238, 239. (see *Zeno* of Athens, *Cleanthes*, *Chrysippus*).
their division of studies, i. 241.
difference between them and Socrates, i. 241-243.
Roman, i. 250, 251.
Seneca in the strictest sense a Stoic, i. 267 (see too *Epictetus*, Marcus *Aurelius*, *Julian*).
agreed with by Jonathan Edwards, ii. 469.
Strafford, Hume's feelings towards, ii. 564.
Strauss, the "*Leben Jesu*," ii. 659-661.
St. Simon, his philosophy, ii. 663.
Stuart, the dynasty of, its effect on England, ii. 205.
feeling of Hume towards, ii. 564 (see too *James* I., *Charles* II.)
Stuart (Dugald), Hamilton's opinion of, ii. 581.
his philosophy, causes of its success, ii. 664.
of its failure, ii. 664, 665.
Style, how far evidence of authorship, i. 564 (note).
Suso a Dominican German Mystic, ii. 19-20.
Swedenborg, his mechanical fame, ii. 520.
how he is known in England, ii. 520.
contrasted with Wolff, ii. 521.
his doctrine, ii. 521.
what we may learn from him, ii. 521-522.
a protester against Locke's ascendancy, ii. 523.
Syracuse, Plato's attempt to found his state in, i. 139.

Tacitus contrasted with Seneca, i. 267.
why he studied history, i. 281.
Vico's reverence for him, ii. 504.
Talon a friend of Ramus, ii. 142.
a student of rhetoric at the university of Paris, ii. 142.
Tamagoon, the undue neglect of action, i. 47.
Tasso, his allusion to Ramus, ii. 142.
Tauler, the text on which his discourses turn, ii. 20.
preaches at Strasburg, ii. 26.
criticised by a lay auditor, ii. 26-27.
his change, ii. 27-28.
contrasted with Eckart, ii. 28-29.
a moralist rather than metaphysician, ii. 28.
contrasted with Occam and Wycliffe, ii. 29-31.
Luther's admiration for his sermons, ii. 115.
Telesio (Bernardino), Bacon's opinion of him, ii. 162.
his book "*De Rerum Naturâ*," ii. 162.
his friends and enemies, ii. 163.
admired by Bruno, ii. 163.

Templars, sacredness of their order, i. 534.
  how destroyed by Philip the Fair, ii. 12.
Terence quoted by Gerson, ii. 45, 46.
Tertullian, his opinion of Plato and Aristotle, i. 304-305.
  his character, i. 305.
  his merits, i. 305-306.
  his defects, i. 306.
  contrasted with Clemens, i. 307.
  contrasted with Law, ii. 326.
Tetzel, Leo's feeling towards him, ii. 116.
  Luther's feeling towards, ii. 116.
Themistocles contrasted with Roman heroes, i. 223.
Theodore and *Theodoret* condemned by Justinian, i. 406.
Theodoric, his treatment of Boethius, i. 424.
Theodorus exchanges pleasure for self-glorification as the object of the philosopher, i. 136.
Theodosius, his treatment of Arianism and Paganism, i. 348.
Theology, its connection with philosophy, Preface to vol. i.
  effect of this connection on the historian, Preface to vol. ii.
  of Moses, i. 10-11.
  of the Hindoos (see *Hindoo*, *Brahmin*, *Bhagavad-gita*).
  of Persia (see *Ormuzd*, *Zerduscht*).
  of Greece (see *Zeus*, *Apollo*, *Athene*).
  of Anaxagoras (see *Anaxagoras*).
  of Socrates and Plato (see *Socrates* and *Plato*).
  of Aristotle, no connection with his ethics, i. 218.
  of St. Paul and St. John (see *St. Paul* and *St. John*).
  of Epictetus and Seneca contrasted, i. 274.
  of Trajan (see *Trajan*).
  (See also Marcus *Aurelius*, *Augustin*, *Savonarola*, *Luther*, *Edwards*, *Berkeley*, *Schleiermacher*, *Spinoza*.)
Theophilus stirs up the Christians against Egyptian temples, i. 378.
Theosophy, Egyptian, as explained by Iamblichus, i. 340.
Theurgy, taught by the school of Iamblichus, i. 342.
Thirwall, his name for the Pythagorean Society, i. 106.
Thucydides, moral tone of, contrasted with that of Herodotus, i. 117.
Thucydides, his account of the Melian controversy, i. 118.
  translation of him by Hobbes, ii. 236.
Tillotson, his school, ii. 350.
Timœus, its use to the later Platonists, i. 393. (See also *Plato*.)
Timour, effect of his victory, ii. 63.
Tindal, an historical deist, ii. 455.
Toland, a deist of the beginning of the eighteenth century, ii. 455.
Toryism (see *George* III. and *Johnson*, Samuel).
Trajan, his dialogue with Ignatius, i. 286.
  his belief in a divine director, i. 287.
  reasons for his treatment of Ignatius, i. 287-288.
Travers, his objection to Hooker, ii. 192.
Tribonian, his relation to Justinian, i. 402.
Trygetius, a pupil of Augustin's, i. 373, 374.
Trypho, his dialogue with Justin (see *Justin*).
Tyndale, More's treatment of, ii. 100.

Ulphilas, his instruction of the Goths. i. 415.
Urban, VIII., Bull of, in favour of Lully, i. 661.

Valens, character of, i. 348.
  effect of his age on Ulphilas (see *Ulphilas*).
Valentian, his attitude towards Christianity, i. 348.
Valentian III. puts to death grandfather of Boethius, i. 424.
Van Artevelde, Froissart's account of (see *Froissart*).
Vandals, extermination of, by Justinian, i. 404.
Van den' Ende teaches Spinoza, ii. 373.
  Spinoza's affection for his daughter, ii. 373.
Vedas not yet properly translated, i. 37.
  the invocations in, i. 37.
  compared with the Bhagavad-gita. i. 49.
Vico, his poverty, ii. 500.
  his posthumous triumphs, ii. 500
  his domestic life, ii. 500-501.
  his studies, ii. 501.

Vico, the three instincts which he found in men, ii. 501.
  the new science, ii. 501-502.
  his theory about Homer, ii. 502.
  his relation to modern ideology, ii. 502, 503.
  his opposition to Locke and Descartes, ii. 503.
  his reverence for Bacon, Tacitus, Grotius and Plato, ii. 503-504.
  contrasted with Montesquieu and Voltaire, ii. 504.
  compared with Leibnitz, ii. 504-505.
  a protester against the English ascendancy in philosophy, ii. 523.
  contrasted with Hume, ii. 576.
  his effect on Germany, ii. 642, 659.
Villemain, his account of Montesquieu, ii. 499.
Virgil, his hopes from the son of Polleo, i. 254.
  why Dante looked on him as a leader, i. 254, 674.
  Ramus criticises him, ii. 143.
Voet publishes theses against atheism, ii. 293.
  his persecution of Descartes, ii. 293.
Voltaire, his career before his arrival in England, ii. 487-488.
  his letters on England, ii. 488-489.
  his view of former philosophers, ii. 489-491.
  usefulness of these letters, ii. 491-492.
  why he was persecuted for them, ii. 492-494.
  his chances of success, ii. 495.
  contrasted with Montesquieu, ii. 500.
  his opinion of the necessity of riches, ii. 500.
  reason why he obtained more influence than Vico, ii. 504.
  his influence over Frederick II., ii. 520.
  his relations to Locke, ii. 523.
  his victory, ii. 523.
  his mistake about Stillingfleet, ii. 526.
  what his letters explain to us, ii. 527.
  his attitude towards philosophy, ii. 528.
    towards theology, ii. 528-529.
  justification of his reputation, ii. 529.
  his doctrine contrasted with Condorcet's, ii. 529-530.
Voltaire, his attack on Joan of Arc, ii. 530.
  introduces philosophical history, ii. 530-531.
  his dislike to extremes, ii. 531.
  his relation to Geneva contrasted with that of Rousseau, ii. 542.
  his historical criticism compared with Hume's, ii. 564.
  the "ignorance" which he attributed to all men, ii. 673.

Wadding, his view of the nationality of Duns Scotus, i. 645.
Walpole, Sir Robert, compared with Cornelius Agrippa, ii. 127.
  effect of his policy on the students of it, ii. 589.
Walton, his life of Hooker, ii. 189, 190.
Warburton, his view of the "Essay on Man," ii. 455-456.
Warens (Madame), Rousseau's connection with, ii. 543.
Wen-wang, his park, i. 69.
Wesel, his influence on Reuchlin, ii. 104.
Wesley, John and Charles, contrasted with Butler, ii. 465-466.
  their relation with America, ii. 468-469.
Whateley, his view of Aristotle's "Earlier Analytics," i. 188.
Whichcote, a Cambridge Platonist, ii. 346, 349.
Whiggism of Locke, ii. 447.
  its effect on Shaftesbury, ii. 451.
  developed by Rousseau, ii. 552.
  contrasted with the doctrines of Rousseau, ii. 552.
  Burke's attitude towards, ii. 590, 593, 594.
Whiston, cruelties of the Church to, ii. 483.
Whitefield contrasted with Butler, ii. 465-466.
  his relations with America, ii. 468-469.
William of Champeaux (see *Abelard*).
William of Malmesbury, his recognition of the value of Gerbert's studies, i. 505.
William of Normandy (see *Normandy*).
  of Occam (see *Occam*).
  of Orange (see *Orange*).
  Rufus (see *Rufus*).
Williams (Lord Keeper), his view of prudence, ii. 210.

Winckelmann, his writings on art, ii. 612.
Winkworth, Miss, her translation of Tauler's sermons, ii. 27.
Wisdom, the love of, Preface, xliii.
  the kind of, which Solomon studied, i. 20.
  a personal wisdom, i. 21.
  a divine wisdom, i. 22.
  of God recognized by Job, i. 25.
  Kreeshna's account of, in the Bhagavad-gita, i. 45.
  search after, by the Greeks, i. 81.
  by Thales, i. 90.
  "justified in her children," i. 533.
Wisdom, book of, i. 256.
  (See *Philosophy.*)
"*Wolfenbüttel* Fragments," ii. 614.
Wolff, Christian, the beginner of a German school, ii. 517-518.
  his relations to Leibnitz and Descartes, ii. 518.
  his persecution, ii. 519.
  Frederick II. attracted by, ii. 519.
  but gives him up for Voltaire, ii. 20.5
  contrasted with Swedenborg, ii. 521.
  contrasted with Leibnitz, ii. 523.
  his struggle with Voltaire, ii. 606, 607.
  supported by the divines, ii. 607.
Wolff the theorizer about Homer, ii. 502.
Worthington, a Cambridge platonist, ii. 346, 349.
Wollaston his "Religion of Nature," ii. 454-455.
Wordsworth, his attempt to arrange his poetry, ii. 219.
Wycliffe, feelings of his followers towads William of Occam, ii. 16.
  a realist, ii. 16-17.
  and Occam compared with Tauler, ii. 30-31.
  relations with Huss, ii. 36.
  contrasted with Occam, ii. 436.

Xavier, his superiority to European Jesuits, ii. 152.
Xenophanes, his feelings towards Pythagoras, i. 109.
  his questions about the gods, i. 109-110.
  contrasted with Parmenides, i. 110-111.
  with Socrates, i. 146.
Xenophanes, Plato's feeling towards, i. 148, 149.
Xenophon, his account of Socrates like the account of Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 57.
  his Cyropædia, i. 78.
  brings out the struggle between Greece and Persia, i. 82.
  his portrait of Socrates, i. 133-134.
  the interpreter of Socrates to Cicero, i. 283.
  opinion of Clemens of his character and beliefs, i. 308.

Y-King, the, Khoung-fou-tseu's admiration for, i. 58.
Yogi, the, or perfect man of the Bhagavad-gita, i. 43.
Yu, dynasty of, the moral of its history, i. 56.

Zendavesta, its character, i. 74.
  its Polytheism, i. 76.
  contrasted with the later Persian philosophy, i. 77.
  its recognition of eternity, i. 78.
Zeno of Elea, his defence of Parmenides, i. 111-112.
  his use of words, i. 112.
  his discovery of logic, i. 113.
  contrasted with the Megarian school, i. 138.
  contrasted with his successors, i. 158.
Zeno of Cittium, a pupil of Stilpo, and the founder of Stoicism, i. 138.
  effect of isolation of mind on him, i. 239.
  his dislike of Plato's republic, i. 239.
  his honour at Athens, i. 239-240.
  his relations with Cleanthes, i. 240.
Zerduscht, his biography contrasted with that of Khoung-fou-tseu, i. 73.
  his time i. 73-74.
  a real person, i. 74-75.
  his conflicts with the Magians, i. 75-76.
  a Polytheist, i. 76.
  his worship of Ormuzd, i. 76-77.
  his use of prayer, i. 77.
  contrasted with the Brahmins, i. 78.
  his idea of the infinite (see *Zendavesta*).
  a practical man, i. 79.
  effect of his teaching, i. 79-80.

Zerduscht, his faults and virtues, i. 80-81.
  (See *Persia*, *Ormuzd*, *Magians*, *Darius* Hystaspes, *Cyrus*, *Zendavesta*).
  Ficinus's feelings for, ii. 61.
  Vico's theory about, ii. 502.
Zeus, the character of, i. 82-83.
  contrasted with Ormuzd (see *Ormuzd*).
Zeus contrasted with Brahm, i. 86.
Ziska, his protest against learning, ii. 94.
Zoroaster (see *Zerduscht*).
Zwingle compared with Erasmus, ii. 110.
  Luther's impatience of his doctrine, ii. 131.

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